THE DEATH OF ROBERT, EARLE OF HVNTINGTON.

(***)

OTHERWISE CALLED
Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde:
with the lamentable Tragedie of chaste
MATILDA, his faire maid MARIAN,
poysoned at Dunmowe by King
IOHN.

Acted by the Right Honourable, the Earle of
Notingham, Lord high Admirall of
England, his seruants.

¶ Imprinted at London, for *William Leake*, 1601.

THE DEATH OF ROBERT, EARLE OF HVNTINGTON.

(***)

¶ Enter Frier *Tucke*.

SCEANE. I.

Frier.

HOlla, holla, holla: follow, follow, followe. Like noyse within. Now benedicite, what fowle absurditie, follie & foolerie had like to followed mee! I & my mates, like addle pates, inuiting great States, to see our last play, are hunting the hay, with ho, that way, the goodly Heart ranne, with followe little Iohn, Much play the man; and I, like a sot, haue wholly forgot the course of our plot: but crosse-bowe lye downe, come on Friers gowne, hoode couer my crowne, and with a lowe becke, preuent a sharpe checke.

Blithe sit yee all, and winke at our rude cry,
Winde where wee left, in Sheerewod merrily,
The king, his traine, Robin, his yeomen tall
Gone to the wodde to see the fat deare fall.
Wee left maid Marian busie in the bower,
And prettie linny looking, euery hower,

For their returning from the hunting game,
And therefore seeke to set each thing in frame.
Warman all wofull for his sinne we left.
Sir Doncaster, whose villanies and theft,
You neuer heard of, but too soone yee shall,
Hurt with the Priors shame them both befall,
They two will make our mirth be short and small.
But least I bring yee sorrowe ere the time,
Pardon I beg of your well iudging eyne,
And take in part bad prologue, and rude play:
The hunters holloo, Tucke must needes away.
Therefore downe weede, bowe doe the deede, to make
the Stagge bleede, and if my hand speede, hey for a cry,
w a throate strained hie, & a lowde yall, at the beasts
fall. *Exit.* Holloo within.

Enter King, *Ely*, *Fitzwater*, *Salsbury*, *Chester*,
Prince *Iohn*, little *Iohn*, *Scathlocke*.

Kin. Where is our mother?
Pr. Iohn. Mounted in a stand.
Sir fallowe deere haue dyed by her hand.
Fitz. Three Stags I slewe.
Ely. Two Bucks by me fell downe.
Chest. As many dyed by mee.
Salf. But I had three.
Prin. Scathlocke, wheres Much?
Sca. When last I saw him, may it please your Grace,
He and the Frier footed it apace.
Prin. Scathlocke, no Grace, your fellowe & plaine Iohn.
Lit. Ioh. I warrant you, Much will be here anone.
Pr. Think'st thou little Iohn, that he must Iinny wed?
Lit. Ioh. No doubt he must.
Prin. Then to adorne his head we shall haue hornes
good store.
King. God, for thy grace,

Now

How could I misse the Stagge I had in chase!
Twice did I hit him in the very necke,
When backe my arrowes flewe, as they had smit
On some sure armour. Where is Robin Hood,
And ỳ wighte Scarlet? Seeke them little Iohn. *Exit Ioh.*
Ile haue that Stagge before I dine to day.

¶ *Enter Much.*

Much. O the frier, the frier, the frier.

King. Why, how now Much?

Cry ye mercy, master king. Marry this is the matter; Scarlet is following the Stagge you hit, and has almost lodg'd him: now the Frier has the best bowe, but yours, in all the field: which and Scarlet had, he would haue him straight.

Kin. Where is thy master?

Much. Nay, I cannot tell, nor the Frier neither.

Scath. I heare them holloo, farre off in the wod.

King. Come Much, canst lead vs where as Scarlet is?

Muc. Neuer feare you; follow me. *Exeunt*, hollooing.

SCEANE. II.

¶ *Enter* sir *Doncaster*, Prior.

Don. You were resolued to haue him poysoned,
Or kild, or made away, you car'd not how.
What diuell makes you doubtfull now to doo't?

Pri. Why Doncaster? his kindnesse in our needes.

Don. A plague vpon his kindnesse, let him die.
I neuer tempered poyson in my life, but I imployd it.
By th'masse and I loose this,
For euer looke to loose my company.

Pri. But will you giue it him?

Don. That cannot bee.
The Queene, Earle Chester, and Earle Salisbury,
If they once see mee, I am a deade man:

Or did they heare my name, Ile lay my life,
They all would hunt me, for my life.
Pri. What hast thou done to them?
Don. Faith, some odde toyes,
That made me fly the south: but passe wee them:
Here is the poyson: will you giue it Robin?
Pri. Now by this gold I will.
Don. Or as I said, for euer I defie your company.
Pri. Well, he shall die, and in his iollity:
And in my head I haue a policy
To make him die disgrac't.
Don. O tell it Prior.
Pri. I will, but not as now: Call the Frier within.
Weele seeke a place, the woods haue many eares,
And some me thinkes are calling for the Frier. *Exeunt.*

SCEANE. III.

¶ *Enter, calling the Frier, as afore.*

Ioh. The Frier, the Frier?
Scath. Why, where's this Frier?
Fri. Here sir. what is your desire?

¶ *Enter Robin Hoode.*

Rob. Why Frier, what a murren dost thou meane?
The King cals for thee. For, a mightie stagge,
(That hath a copper ring about his necke,
With letters on it, which hee would haue read)
Hath Scarlet kild. I pray thee goe thy way.
Fri. Master I will, no longer will I stay. *Exit.*
Rob. Good vnkle be more carefull of your healthy,
And you sir Doncaster, your wounds are greene.
Both. Through your great kindnes, we are cõforted.
Rob. And Warman, I aduise you to more mirth.
Shun solitary walkes, keepe company,
Forget your fault: I haue forgiuen the fault.
Good Warman be more blithe, and at this time,
A little helpe my Marian and her maide:

Much

much ſhall come to you ſtraight: a little now,
We muſt al ſtriue to doe the beſt we may. Exit, winding.
War. On you and her Ile waite, vntill my dying day.
Exeunt, and as they are going out, *Doncaſter* puls *Warman*.
Don. Warman a word. My good Lord Prior and I
Are full of griefe, to ſee thy miſery.
War. My miſery, ſir Doncaſter? why? I thanke God,
I neuer was in better ſtate than now.
Pri. Why, what a ſeruile ſlauiſh minde haſt thou?
Art thou a man, and canſt be ſuch a beaſt,
Aſſe-like to beare the burthen of thy wrong?
War. What wrong haue I? Iſt wrong to be relieu'd?
Don. Relieu'd ſaiſt thou?
Why, ſhallow witted foole,
Doſt thou not ſee Robins ambitious pride?
And how he clymes by pittying, and aſpires,
By humble lookes, good deedes, and ſuch fond toyes,
To be a monarch, raigning ouer vs,
As if wee were the vaſſals to his will?
War. I am his vaſſall, and I will be ſtill.
Pri. Warman, thou art a foole. I doe confeſſe,
Were theſe good deedes done in ſinceritie,
Pittie of minde, thine or this knights diſtreſſe,
Without vaine brags, it were true charitie:
But to relieue our fainting bodies wants,
And grieue our ſoules with quippes, and bitter braids,
Is good turnes ouerturnd: no thanks wee owe
To any, whatſoeuer helps vs ſo.
War. Neither himſelfe, nor any that hee keepes,
Euer vpbraided mee, ſince I came laſt.
Don. O God haue mercie on thee, ſilly aſſe.
Doth he not ſay to euery gueſt that comes;
This ſame is Warman, that was once my ſteward?
War. And what of that?

Pri. Is not as much to say;
Why, here he stands that once did mee betray.
Don. Did hee not bring a troope to grace himselfe,
Like Captiues waiting on a conquerours chaire,
And calling of them out, by one and one,
Presented them, like fairings, to the king?
Pri. O, I: there was a rare inuention:
A plague vpon the foole.
I hate him worse for that than all the rest.
War. Why should you hate him? why should you or you
Enuie this noble Lord, thus as you doe?
Don. Nay rather, why dost thou not ioyne in hate
With vs, that lately liu'dst like vs, in wealthy state?
Remember this, remember foolish man,
How thou hast bene the Shrieue of Notingham.
Pri. Cry to thy thoughts, let this thought neuer cease,
I haue bene Iustice of my Soueraignes peace,
Lord of faire liuings: men with cap and knee,
In liueries waited bowerly on mee.
Don. And when thou think'st, thou hast bene such & such,
Thinke then what tis to be a mate to Much,
To runne when Robin bids, come at his call,
Be mistresse Marians man.
Pri. Nay thinke withall
War. What shall I thinke? but thinke vpon my need,
When men fed dogs, and me they would not feede:
When I despaird through want, and sought to die,
My pitious master, of his charitie,
Forgaue my fault, releu'd and saued mee:
This doe I thinke vpon, and you should thinke
(If you had hope of soules saluation)
First Prior, that he is of thy flesh and bloode,
That thou art vnkle vnto Robin Hoode:
That by extortion thou didst get his lands:
God, and I know how it came to thy hands:

How

How thou pursu'dst him in his misery,
And how heauen plagu'd thy hearts extreamitie:
Thinke Doncaster, when, hired by this Prior,
Thou cam'st to take my maister with the Frier,
And wert thy selfe tane, how he set thee free,
Gaue thee an hundred pound to comfort thee,
And both bethinke yee how but yesterday,
Wounded and naked in the fielde you lay,
How with his owne hand he did raise your heads,
Powrd balme into your wounds, your bodies fed,
Watcht when yee slept, wept when he sawe your woe,
Don. Stay Warman, stay: I graunt that he did so,
And you, turnd honest, haue forsworne the villaine:
War. Euen from my soule, I villany detie.
Pri. A blessed hower: a fit time now to die:
Don. And you shall, Conscience. Stab him, he fals,
War. O forgiue mee, God,
And saue my maister from their bloodie hands.
Pri. What, hast thou made him sure?
Don It is deade sure: he is dead, if that be sure.
Pri. Then let vs thrust the dagger in his hand,
And when the next comes, cry he kild himselfe.
Don. That must be now: yonder comes Robin Hood.
No life in him.
Pri. No, no, not any life.
Three mortall wounds haue let in piercing ayre,
And at their gaps, his life is cleane let out.
Rob. Who is it vncle that you so bemone?
Pri. Warman, good nephew, whom sir Doncaster & I
Found freshly bleeding, as he now doth lye.
You were scarce gone, when he did stab himselfe.
Ro. O God, he in his own hand houlds his own harts
I dreated too much his distressed looke: (hurt,
Belike the wretch despaird, and slewe himselfe.
Don. May, thats most sure, yet he had little reason,

Considering how well you vled him.
Rob. Well, I am sorie; but must not be sad,
Because the King is comming to my bower.
Helpe mee, I pray thee, to remoone his bodie,
Least he should come and see him murdered.
Sometime anone he shall be buried. Exit.
Pri. Good, all is good: this is as I desire.
Now for a face of pure hypocrisie:
Sweete murder, cloath thee in religious weedes,
Raigne in my bosome, that with helpe of thee,
I may effect this Robins Tragedie.

¶ Enter *Robin, Doncaster.*

Do. Nay, nay, you must not take this thing so heauily.
Rob. A bodies losse, sir Doncaster, is much:
But a soules too, is more to be bemon'd.
Pri. Truly I wonder at your vertuous minde:
O God to one so kinde, who'ud be vnkinde!
Let goe this griefe, now must you put on ioy,
And for the many fauours I haue found,
So much exceeding all conceipt of mine,
Unto your cheere, Ile adde a pretious drinke,
Of colour rich, and red, sent mee from Rome.
There's in it Moly, Syrian Balsamum,
Golds rich *Elixer*: O tis pretious!
Rob. Where is it vncle?
Pri. As yesterday,
Sir Doncaster and I rid on our way,
Theeues did beset vs, bound vs as you saw:
And among other things, did take from mee,
This rich confection: but regardlesly,
As common drinke, they cast, into a bush,
The bottle, which this day sir Doncaster
Fetcht, and hath left it in the inner lodging:
I tell you cosin (I doe loue you well)
A pint of this ransome the Sophies sonne,

When

When he was taken in Natolia.
I meant indeede to giue it my liege Lord,
In hope to haue his fauour: but to you
I put my selfe, be my good friend,
And, in your owne restoring, mee restore.
Rob. Unkle I will, you neede vrge that no more.
But whats the vertues of this pretious drinke?
Pri. It keepes fresh youth, restores diseased sight,
Helps natures weakenesse, smothes the scars of woūds,
And cooles the intrals with a balmie breath,
When they by thirst or trauell boyle with heate.
Rob. Unkle I thanke you, pray you let me haue
A cuppe prepared, gainst the king comes in,
To coole his heate: my selfe will giue it him.
Pri. And when he drinkes, be bold to say he drinkes
A richer draught than that dissolued pearle,
Which Cleopatra dranke to Antonie.
Rob. I haue much businesse; let it be your charge,
To make this rich draught readie for the King,
And I will quit it, pray yee doe not faile. Exit.
Pri. I warrant you, good Nephew.
Don. Better, and better still.
We thought before but to haue poysond him,
And now shall Robin Hoode destroy the king.
Euen when the King, ỳ Queene, the Prince, the Lords
Joy in his vertues, this supposed vice
Will turne, to sharpe hate, their exceeding loue.
Pri. Ha, ha, ha, I cannot chuse but laugh,
To see my cosin cosend in this sort.
Faile him quoth you? nay hang mee if I doe.
But Doncaster art sure the poysons are well mixt?
Don. Tut, tut, let me alone for poysoning:
I haue alreadie turnd ore foure, or fiue,
That angerd mee. But tell mee Prior,
Wherefore so deadly dost thou hate thy cosin?

Pri. Shall I be plaine? Because if he were deade,
I should be made the Earle of Huntington.
Don. A prettie cause: But thou a church-man art.
Pri. Tut man, if that would fall,
Ile haue a dispensation, and turne tempozall.
But tell mee Doncaster, why dost thou hate him?
Don. By the Malle, I cannot tel. O yes, now I ha't,
I hate thy cousin, Earle of Huntington,
Because so many loue him as there doe,
And I my selfe am loued of so fewe.
Nay, I haue other reasons foz my hate;
Hee is a foole, and will be reconcilde,
To anie foe hee hath: he is too milde,
Too honest foz this wozld, fitter foz heauen:
Hee will not kill these greedie cozmozants,
Noz strippe base pesants of the wealth they haue:
He does abuse a thieues name and an outlawes,
And is indeede no outlawe, noz no theefe,
He is unwozthy of such reuerent names.
Besides, he keepes a paltry whinling girle,
And will not bed, fozsooth, befoze he bride:
Ile stand too't, he abuses maidenhead,
That will not take it, being offered:
Hinders the common wealth of able men.
Another thing I hate him foz againe:
He saies his praiers, fasts eues, giues alms, does good:
Foz these and such like crimes, sweares Doncaster,
To wozke the speedie death of Robin Hoode.
Pri. Well said yfaith. Harke, hark, the king returns:
To doe this deede, my heart like fuel burns. Exeunt.

SCEANE. IIII.

¶ Winde hornes. Enter King, Queene, *Iohn*, *Fitzwater*, *Ely*, *Chester*, *Salsbury*, *Lester*, little *Iohn*, Frier *Tuck*, *Scarlet*, *Scathlocke*, and *Much*, Frier *Tuck* carrying a Stags head, dauncing.

King.

King. Gramercy Frier for thy glee,
Thou greatly hast contented mee,
What with thy sporting and thy game,
I sweare I highly pleased am.
Fri. It was my masters whole desire
That maiden, yeoman, swaine and frier
Their arts and wits should all apply,
For pleasure of your Maiestie.
Qu. Sonne Richard, looke I pray you on the ring,
That was about the necke of the last stagge.
Chest. Was his name Scarlet, that shot off his necke?
Iohn. Chester, it was this honest fellow Scarlet:
This is the fellowe, and a yeoman bold,
As euer courst the swift Hart on the molde.
King. Frier, here's somewhat grau'd vpon the Ring,
I pray thee reade it. Meane while list to mee;
This while, most compassing the Frier about the Ring.
Scarlet and Scathlock, you bold brethren,
Twelue pence a day I giue each for his fee,
And henceforth see yee liue like honest men.
Both. We will my Liege, else let vs dye the death.
Much. A boone, a boone, vpon my knee,
Good king Richard, I begge of thee.
For indeede sir, the troth is, Much is my father, and hee is one of your tenants in Kings Mill at Wakefield all on a greene: There dwelleth a tolly pinder, at Wakefield all on a greene: Now I would haue you, if you wil doe so much for mee, to set mee forward in the way of marriage to Iinny: the mill would not be cast away vpon vs.
King. Much, be thou euer master of that mill,
I giue it thee for thine inheritance.
Much. Thanks pretious Prince of curtesie.
Ile to Inny, and tell her of my lands ysaith. *Exit*
Ioh. Here Frier, here, here it begins,

Fri. read. When Harold hare-foote raigned king,
About my necke he put this ring.
King. In Harolds time, more than a hundred yeare,
Hath this ring bene about this newe slaine Deere!
I am sory now it dyde: but let the same
Head, ring and all be sent to Notingham,
And in the Castle kept for monuments.
Fitz. My Liege, I heard an olde tale long agoe,
That Harold being Goodwins sonne of Kent,
When he had got faire Englands gouernment,
Hunted for pleasure once within this wood,
And singled out a faire and stately Stagge,
Which foote to foote, the king in running caught:
And sure this was the Stagge.
King. It was no doubt.
Chest. But some my Lord affirme,
That Iulius Cæsar many yeares before,
Tooke such a Stag, and such a Poesie writ.
King. It should not be in Iulius Cæsars time:
There was no English vsed in this Land,
Untill the Saxons came, and this is writ
In Saxon characters.
Ioh. Well, 'twas a goodly beast.

¶ Enter *Robin Hoode.*

King. How now earle Robert?
Fri. A forfet, a forfet, my liege Lord.
My masters lawes are on record,
The Court-roll here your Grace may see.
King. I pray thee Frier, read them mee.
Fri. One shall suffice, and this is hee.
No man that commeth in this wood,
To feast, or dwell with Robin Hood,
Shall call him Earle, Lord, Knight, or Squire,
Be no such titles doth desire,
But Robin Hood, plaine Robin Hoode,

That

That honeſt yeoman ſtout and good,
On paine of forfetting a marke,
That muſt be paid to mee his Clarke,
My liege, my liege, this lawe you broke,
Almoſt in the laſt word you ſpoke.
That crime may not acquited bee,
Till Frier Tuck receiue his fee. (Caſts him purſe.

King. Theres more than twenty marks, mad Frier.

Fri. If thus you pay ẏ Clarke his hire,
Oft may you forfet, I deſire.
You are a perfect penitent,
And well you doe your wrong repent:
For this your Highneſſe liberall gift,
I here abſolue you without ſhrift.

King. Gramercies Frier. Now Robin Hood,
Sith Robin Hood it needes muſt bee,
I was about to aſke before,
If thou didſt ſee the great Stags fall.

Rob. I did my Lord, I ſawe it all.
But miſſing this ſame prating Frier,
And hearing you ſo much deſire
To haue the forels companie,
I went to ſeeke ſmall honeſtie.

Fri. But you found much, when you found mee.

Rob. I, Much my man: but not a iot
Of honeſtie in thee, God wot.

Qu. Robin, you doe abuſe the Frier.

Fri. Madam, I dare not call him lyer,
He may be bold with mee, he knowes.
How now Prince Iohn, how goes, how goes
This wod-mans life with you to day?
My fellow Wodnet you would bee.

Ioh. I am thy fellowe, thou doſt ſee:
And to be plaine, as God me ſaue,
So well I like thee, merry knaue,

That I thy company must haue:
Nay, and I will.
Fri. Nay, and you shall.
Rob. My Lord, you neede not feare at all,
But you shall haue his company,
He will be bold I warrant you.
King. Know you where ere a spring is nie?
Faine would I drink, I am right dry.
Rob. I haue a drinke within my bower,
Of pleasing taste, and soueraigne power:
My reuerend uncle giues it mee,
To giue unto your Maiestie.
King. I would be loath indeede, being in heate,
To drinke cold water. Let us to thy bower.
Ro. Runne Frier before, & bid my uncle be in readines.
Fr. Gon wᵒ a trice, on such good businesse. *Exeũt omnes.*

SCEANE. V.

¶ *Enter Marian, with a white apron.*
Mar. What Much? What Iinny? Much? I say.
Much. Whats the matter mistresse?
Mar. I pray thee see, the fueller
Suffer the cooke to want no wodde.
Good Lord, where is this idle girle?
Why Iinny?
Within. I come forsooth.
Mar. I pray thee bring the flowers forth.
Much. Ile goe send her mistres, and help the cookes, if they haue any neede. Exit Much.
Mar. Dispatch good Much. What Iin I say?

¶ *Enter Iinny.*

Much. Hie yee, hie yee: she cals for life.
Mar. Indeede, indeede, you doe me wrong,
To let me cry, and call so long.

Iinny

Iin. Forsooth, I strawed the dining bowers.
And smoth'd the walkes with hearbes & flowers,
The yeomens tables I haue spred,
Drest salts, laid trenchers, set on bread:
May all is well, I warrant you.
Mar. You are not well I promise you,
Your forresleeues are not pind (fie, fie)
And all your hed-geere stands awry.
Giue me the flowers: Goe in for shame,
And quickly see you mend the same. Exit Iinny.
Marian strewing flowers. Enter sir *Doncaster*, prior.
Don. How busie mistresse Marian is?
She thinkes this is her day of blisse.
Pri. But it shall be the wofull'st day
That euer chaunst her, if I may.
Mar. Why are you two thus in the ayre?
Your wounds are greene,
Good cuz haue care.
Pri. Thanks for your kindnesse, gentle maid.
My cosin *Robert* vs hath prayd,
To helpe him in this businesse.
¶ *Enter Frier.*
Fri. Sir Doncaster, sir Doncaster?
Don. Holla.
Fri. I pray you, did you see the Prior?
Pri. Why, here I am. What wouldst thou Frier.
Fri. The king is heated in the chace,
And posteth hitherward apace.
He told my master he was dry,
And hee desires ye, presently
To send the drinke whereof ye spake. Hornes blowe.
Pri. Come, it is here; haste let vs make
Exeunt Prior, and *Frier.*
¶ *Enter* King, *Iohn*, Queene, *Scarlet*, *Scathlocke*, *Ely*, *Fitzwater*, *Salsbury*, *Chester*. *Marian* kneeles downe.

Mar. Moſt gratious Soueraigne, welcome once againe:
Welcome to you, and all your princely traine.
King. Thanks louely hoſteſſe: we are homely gueſts.
Wheres Robin Hood? He promiſed me ſome drinke.
Mar. Your handmaid, Robin will not then be long.
The Frier indeede came running to his vnkle,
Who with ſir Doncaſter were here with mee,
And altogether went for ſuch a drinke.
Kin. Well, in a better time it could not come,
For I am very hot and paſſing dry.
¶ Enter *Robin Hoode*, a cuppe, a towell, leading *Doncaſter*: *Tuck*, and *Much* pulling the Prior.
Rob. Traitor, Ile draw thee out before the king.
Fri. Come murderous Prior.
Much. Come yee dogges face.
Ki. Why how now Robin? wheres y drink you bring?
Rob. Lay holde on theſe.
Farre be it, I ſhould bring your Maieſtie,
The drinke theſe two prepared for your taſte.
King. Why Robin Hoode, be briefe and anſwere mee:
I am amazed at thy troubled lookes.
Rob. Long will not my ill lookes amaze your Grace.
I ſhortly looke, neuer to looke againe.
Mar. Neuer to looke? What will it ſtill be night?
If thou looke neuer, day can neuer be.
What ailes my Robin? Wherefore doſt thou faint?
Rob. Becauſe I cannot ſtand: yet now I can.
Thans to my king, and thanks to Marian.
King. Robin be briefe, and tell vs what hath chanſt?
Rob. I muſt be briefe, for I am ſure of death,
Before a long tale can be halfe way tolde.
Fitz. Of death, my ſonne? bright ſunne of all my ioy?
Death cannot haue the power of vertuous life.
Rob. Not of the vertues, but the life it can. (die?
King. What doſt thou ſpeak of death? how ſhouldſt thou

Rob

Rob. By poison, and the Priors treachery.
Qu. Why, take this soueraigne powder at my hands,
Take it and liue in spite of poysons power.
Don. I, let him forward. Powders quoth ye? hah,
I am a foole then, if a little dust,
The shauing of a horne, a Bezars stone,
Or any Antidote haue power to stay
The execution of my hearts resolue.
Tut, tut, you labour lowely Queene, in vaine,
And on a thanklesse groome your toyle bestowe.
Now hath your foe reuenged you of your foe:
Robin shall die, if all the world sayd no.
Mar. How the Wolfe howles! Fly like a tender Kid
Into thy sheepeheards bosome. Shield mee loue.
Canst thou not Robin? Where shall I be hid?
O God, these Rauens will seaze vpon thy Doue.
Rob. They cannot hurt thee, pray thee doe not feare,
Base curres will couch, the Lyon being neare.
Qu. How workes my powder?
Rob. Very well, faire Queene.
King. Dost thou feele any ease?
Rob. I shall, I trust, anone:
Sleepe falls vpon mine eyes.
O I must sleepe, & they that loue me, do not waken me.
Mar. Sleepe in my lap, and I will sing to thee.
Ioh. He should not sleepe.
Rob. I must, for I must die:
While I liue therfore let me haue some rest.
Fitz. I, let him rest, the poyson vrges sleepe.
When he awakes, there is no hope of life.
Don. Of life? now by the little time I haue to liue,
He cannot liue one howre for your liues.
King. Villaine what art thou?
Don. Why, I am a knight.
Chest. Thou wert indeede.

If it so please your Grace,
I will describe my knowledge of this wretch.
Kin. Doe Chester.
Chest. This Doncaster, for so the fellon hight,
Was, by the king your father, made a knight,
And well in armes he did himselfe behaue,
Many a bitter stormе, the winde of rage
Blasted this Realme with, in those woful daies,
When the vnnaturall fights continued,
Betweene your kingly father and his sonnes.
This cut-throat, knighted in that time of woe,
Seaz'd on a beautious Nunne, at Barkhamsted,
As wee were marching toward Winchester,
After proud Lincolne was compeld to yield,
Hee tooke this virgine straying in the field:
For all the Nunnes and euery Couent fled
The daungers that attended on our troopes.
For those sad times too oft did testifie,
Wars rage hath no regard of pietie.
She humbly praid him, for the loue of heauen,
To guid her to her fathers, two miles thence.
He swore he would, and very well he might:
For to the campe he was a Forager.
Upon the way they came into a wood,
Wherein, in briefe, he stript this tender maid:
Whose lust, when she in vaine had long withstood,
Being by strength and torments ouerlaid,
He did a sacrilegious deede of rape,
And left her bath'd in her owne teares and blood.
When she reuiu'd, she to her fathers got,
And got her father to make iust complaint,
Unto your mother, being then in campe.
Qu. Is this the villaine Chester, that defilde
Sir Eustace Stutuiles chast and beautious childe?
Don. Madam, this is hee,

That

That made a wench daunce naked in a wood:
And for shee did denie what I desirde,
I scourg'd her for her pride, till her faire skinne
With stripes was checkred like a vintners grate.
And what was this? A mightie matter sure.
I haue a thousand more than she desirde,
And cut the squeaking throats of some of them:
I grieue I did not hirs,
Qu. Punish him Richard.
A fairer virgine neuer sawe the sunne.
A chaster maid was neuer sworne a Nunne.
King. How scap't the villaine punishment, that time?
Fitz. I rent his spurres off, and disgraded him.
Chest. And then he raild vpon the Queene and mee.
Being committed, he his keeper slue,
And to your father fled, who pardond him.
Rich. God giue his soule a pardon for that sinne.
Sals. O had I heard his name, or seene his face,
I had defended Robin from this chance.
Ah villaine, shut those gloomy lights of thine.
Remembrest thou a little sonne of mine,
Whose nurse at Wilton first thou rauishedst,
And slew'st two maids that did attend on them?
Don. I grant, I dasht the braines out of a brat,
Thine if he were, I care not: had he bin
The first borne comfort of a royall king,
And should haue paid when Doncaster cried peace,
I would haue done by him as then I did.
King. Soone shall the world be rid of such a wretch,
Let him be hangd aliue, in the high way, that ioyneth to the power.
Don. Aliue or deade, I reck not how I die.
You, them, and these, I desperately defie.
Ely. Repent, or neuer looke to be absolu'd,
But die accurst as thou deseruest well.

Don. Then giue me my desert; curse one by one.
Ely. First I accurse thee, and, if thou persist,
Unto damnation leaue thee wretched man.
Don. What doe I care for your damnation?
Am I not doom'd to death? what more damnation
Can there insue your loud and yelling cryes?
Pri. Yes diuell: heare thy fellowe spirit speake,
Who would repent; O faine he would repent,
After this bodies bitter punishment,
There is an euer-during endlesse woe,
A quenchlesse fire, an vnconsuming paine,
Which desperate soules and bodies must indure.
Don. Can you preach this, yet set me on sir Prior,
To runne into this endlesse, quenchlesse fier?
Pri. High heauens shewe mercie to my many ils.
Neuer had this bene done, but like a fiend,
Thou temptedst me with ceaseleslesse diuelish thoughts.
Therefore I curse, with bitternesse of soule,
The bower wherein I saw thy balefull eyes.
My eyes I curse, for looking on those eyes.
My eares I curse, for harkning to thy tongue.
I curse thy tongue for tempting of myne eares.
Each part I curse, that wee call thine or mine:
Thine for enticing mine, mine following thine.
Don. A holy prayer. what Collect haue we next?
This time *Robin* stirres.
Fitz. My Marian wanteth words, such is her woe:
But old *Fitzwater* for his girle and him
Begs nothing, but worlds plague for such a foe,
Which causeleslesse harmd a vertuous noble man,
A pitter of his griefes, when he felt griefe:
Therefore bethinke thee of thy hatefull deede,
Thou faithlesse Prior, and thou this ruthlesse theefe.
Pri. Will no man curse me, giuing so much cause?
Then Doncaster, our selues our selues accurse,

And

And let no good betide to thee or mee.
All the yeomen, Frier, Much, Iinny cry;
All. Amen, amen: accurſed may ye bee,
For murdring Robin, flower of curteſie.

Robin ſits vp.

Rob. O ring not ſuch a peale for Robins death,
Let ſweete forgiueneſſe be my paſſing bell.
Art thou there Marian? then fly forth my breath:
To die within thy armes contents me well.
Pri. Keepe in, keepe in a little while thy ſoule,
Till I haue powr'd my ſoule forth at thy feete.
Rob. I ſlept not vnkle, I your griefe did heare,
Let him forgiue your ſoule that bought it deare:
Your bodies deede, I in my death forgiue,
And humbly begge the king that you may liue.
Stand to your Cleargie vnkle, ſaue your life,
And lead a better life than you haue done.
Pri. O gentle Nephew, ah my brothers ſonne,
Thou dying glory of old Huntington,
Wiſheſt thou life to ſuch a murdrous foe?
I will not liue, ſith thou muſt life forgoe.
Oh happie Warman, bleſſed in thy end,
Now too too late thy truth I doe commend.
O Nephew, Nephew, Doncaſter and I
Murdred poore Warman, for he did denie
To ioyne with vs in this blacke tragedy.
Rob. Alas poore Warman. Frier, little Iohn,
I told ye both where Warmans bodie lay:
And of his buriall Ile diſpoſe anone.
King. Is there no lawe, Lord Ely, to conuict,
This Prior, that confeſſeth murders thus?
Ely. He is a hallowed man, and muſt be tried,
And puniſht by the cenſure of the Church.
Pri. The Church therein doth erre: God doth allowe
No Canon to preſerue a murderers life.

Richard, king Richard,, in thy Grandsires daies,
A law was made, the Clergie swore thereto,
That whatsoeuer Church-man did commit
Treason, or murder, or false felonie,
Should like a seculer be punished.
Treason we did, for sure we did intend
King Richards poisoning, Soueraigne of this land.
Murder we did in worthy king Warmans end,
And my deare Nephewes, by this fatall hand.
And theft we did, for we haue robd the king,
The State, the Nobles, Commons, and his men,
Of a true Peere, firme Piller, liberall Lord.
Fitzwater we haue robd of a kinde sonne,
And Marians loue-ioyes we haue quite vndoone.
Don. Whoppe, what a coyle is here w̄ your confession?
Pri. I aske but iudgement for my foule transgression.
King. Thy own mouth hath condemned thee.
Hence with him.
Hang this man dead, then see him buried:
But let the other hang aliue in chaines.
Don. I thanke you sir.

Exeunt yeomen, *Frier*, prisoners, *Much*.

Ioh. My selfe will goe, my Lord,
And see sharpe Iustice done vpon these slaues.
Rob. O goe not hence Prince Iohn: a word or two
Before I die, I faine would say to you.
King. Robin, wee see what we are sad to see,
Death like a champion treading downe thy life:
Yet in thy end somwhat to comfort thee,
Wee freely giue to thy betrothed wife,
Beautious and chast Matilda, all those lands,
False by thy folly, to the Priors hands,
And by his fault now forfeited to mee:
Earle Huntington, she shall thy Countesse bee,
And thy wight yeomen, they shall wend with mee,

Against

Against the faithlesse enemies of Christ.
Rob. Bring forth a Beere, and couer it with greene:
A Beere is brought in.
That on my death-bed I may here sit downe.
Beere brought, he sits.
At Robins buriall let no blacke be seene,
Let no hand giue for him a mourning gowne:
For in his death, his king hath giuen him life,
By this large gift, giuen to his maiden wife.
Chaste maid Matilda, Countesse of account,
Chase, with thy bright eyes, all these clouds of woe,
From these faire cheekes, I pray thee sweete do so.
Thinke it is bootelesse folly, to complaine,
For that which neuer can be had againe.
Queene Elianor, you once were Matilds foe:
Prince Iohn, you long sought her vnlawfull loue:
Let dying Robin Hood intreat you both,
To change those passions Madame turne your hate,
To princely loue; Prince Iohn, conuert your loue
To vertuous passions, chast and moderate.
O that your gratious right hands would infolde,
Matildas right hand, prisoned in my palme,
And sweare to doe what Robin Hood desires;
Qu. I sweare I will, I will a mother be,
To faire Matildas life and chastitie.
Ioh. When Iohn solicites chast Matildaes eares,
With lawlesse sutes, as he hath often done:
Or offers to the altars of her eyes,
Lasciuious Poems, stuft with vanities,
He craues to see but short and sower dates,
His death be like to Robins he desires,
His periur'd body proue a poysoned prey,
For cowled Monkes, and barefoote begging Friers.
Rob. Inough, inough, Fitzwater, take your child:
My dying frost which no sunnes heat can thawe,

Closes the powers of all my outward parts,
My freezing blood runnes backe vnto my heart,
Where it assists death, which it would resist:
Only my loue a little hinders death.
For he beholds her eyes, and cannot smite:
Then goe not yet Matilda, stay a while.
Frier, make speede, and list my latest will.
Mat. O let mee looke, for euer in thy eyes,
And lay my warme breath to thy bloodlesse lips,
If my sight can restraine deaths tyrannies,
Or keepe liues breath within thy bosome lockt.
Rob. Away, away,
Forbeare, my loue: all this is but delay.
Fitz. Come maiden daughter, from my maiden sonne,
And giue him leaue to doe what must be done.
Rob. First I bequeath my soule to all soules sauer,
And will my bodie to be buried,
At Wakefield, vnderneath the Abbey wall:
And in this order make my funerall;
When I am dead, stretch me vpon this Beere,
My beades and Primer shall my pillowe bee:
On this side lay my bowe, my good shafts here,
Upon my brest the crosse, and vnderneath,
My trustie sworde, thus fastned in the sheath.
Let Warmans bodie at my feete be laid,
Poore Warman, that in my defence did die,
For holy dirges, sing me wodmens songs,
As ye to Wakefield walke, with voices shrill:
This for my selfe: my goods and plate I giue
Among my yeomen: them I doe bestowe,
Upon my Soueraigne, Richard. This is all.
My liege farewell, my loue farewell, farewell.
Farewell faire Queene, Prince Iohn and noble Lords.
Father Fitzwater heartily adieu,
Adieu my yeomen tall.

Mat.

Matilda close mine eyes.
Frier farewell, farewell to all.
Mat. O must my hands with enuious death conspire,
To shut the morning gates of my liues light:
Fitz. It is a duetie, and thy loues desire,
Ile helpe thee girle to close vp Robins sight.
King. Laments are bootelesse, teares cannot restore
Lost life: Matilda, therefore weepe no more.
And since our mirth is turned into mone,
Our merry sport, to tragick funerall,
Wee will prepare our power for Austria,
After earle Roberts timelesse buriall.
Fall to your wod-songs therefore yeomen bold,
And deck his herse with flowers, that lou'd you deare,
Dispose his goods, as hee hath them disposd.
Fitzwater and matilda, bide you here,
See you the bodie vnto Wakefield borne,
A little wee will beare yee company,
But all of vs at London point to meete:
Thither Fitzwater, bring earle Robins men;
And Frier, see you come along with them.
Fri. Ah my liege Lord, the Frier faints,
And hath no words to make complaints:
But since he must forsake this place,
He will awaite, and thanks your Grace.

Song. Weepe, weepe, ye wod-men waile,
Your hands with sorrow wring:
Your master Robin Hood lies deade,
Therefore sigh as you sing.
Here lies his Primer and his beades,
His bent bowe and his arrowes keene,
His good sworde and his holy crosse,
Now cast on flowers fresh and greene:
And as they fall, shed teares and say,

Wella, wella day, wella, wella day:
Thus cast yee flowers and sing,
And on to Wakefield take your way. *Exeunt.*

Fri. Here dothe the Frier leaue with grieuance:
Robin is deade, that grac't his entrance:
And being dead he craues his audience,
With this short play, they would haue patience.

¶ Enter *Chester.*

Chest. Nay Fryer, at request of thy kinde friend,
Let not thy Play so soone be at an end.
Though Robin Hoode be deade, his yeomen gone,
And that thou thinkst there now remaines not one,
To act an other Sceane or two for thee:
Yet know we full well, to please this company,
We meane to end Matildaes Tragedie.

Fri. Off then, I wish you, with your Kendall greene:
Let not sad griefe, in fresh aray be seene.
Matildaes storie is repleat with teares,
Wrongs, desolations, ruins, deadly feares.
In, and attire yee: though I tired be,
Yet will I tell my mistresse Tragedie.
Apolloes master doone I inuocate:
To whome henceforth my deedes I dedicate:
That of his Godhead, 'boue all Gods diuine,
With his rich spirit he would lighten mine:
That I may sing true layes of trothlesse deedes,
Which to conceiue, my heart through sorrow bleeds.
Cheere thee, sad soule, and in a loftie line,
Thunder out wrong, compast in clowdy teares.

Enter in blacke.

Shewe to the eyes, till the beholders eares,
With all the liuely acts of lustfull rage,
Restraind by modest teares, and chastities intreats,
And let king Iohn that ill part personage,
By sutes, deuices, practices and threats:

And

And when he sees all serueth to no end,
Of chaste Matilda let him make an end.
Cho. We are all fitted, Frier, shall we beginne?
Fri. Well art thou suted: would my order would
Permit me habit equall to my heart.
Cho. If you remember, Iohn did take an oath,
Neuer againe to seeke Matildaes loue.
Fri. O what is he, thats sworne affections slaue,
That will not violate all lawes, all oathes?
And being mightie, what will he omit,
To compasse his intents, though nere so ill:
You must suppose king Richard now is deade,
And Iohn (restlesse) is faire Englands Lord:
Who striuing to forget Matildaes loue,
Takes to his wife the beautious Isabell,
Betroth'd to Hugh de Briu, Earle of North March:
And picking quarrels vnder shewe of kinne,
Wholly diuorces his first Queene away:
But yet Matilda, still, still troubles him,
And being in the Court, so oft he courts her,
That by her noble father, old Fitzwater,
She is remoou'd from his lust-tempting eye.
But tides restraind, ore swell their bounds with rage:
Her absence addes more fuell to his fire.
In sleepe he sees her, and his waking thoughts,
Studie by day to compasse his desire.
Cho. Frier, since now you speake of visions,
It was receiued by tradition,
From those that were right neere vnto king Iohn,
Of three strange visions, that to him appeard:
And as I guesse, I tould you what they were.
Fri, With them I will begin: draw but that vaile,
And there king Iohn sits sleeping in his chaire.

¶ Drawe the curten, the king sits sleeping, his sworde by

his side. Enter *Austria*, before whome commeth *Ambition*: and bringing him before the chaire, king *Iohn*, in sleepe, maketh signes to auoid, and holdeth his owne crowne fast with both his hands.

Fr. Ambition, that had euer waited on king Iohn,
Now brings him Austria, easie to be tane,
Being wholly tam'd by Richards warlike hand,
And bids him aduc that Dukedome to his crowne:
But he puts by Ambition, and contemnes
All other kingdomes, but the English crowne,
Which he holds fast, as if hee would not loose.

¶ Enter *Constance*, leading young *Arthur*: both offer to take the crowne; but with his foote he ouerturneth them: to them commeth *Insurrection*, ledde by the *F.* K. and L. menacing him, and lead the childe againe to the chaire: but he only layeth hand on his sworde, and with his foote ouerthroweth the childe, whome they take vp as deade: and *Insurrection* flying, they mournefully beare in the bodie.

Fr. The Ladie and the childe that did ascend,
Striuing in vaine to take the crowne from Iohn,
Were Constance, and her sonne the Duke of Britaine,
Heire to the elder brother of the king.
Yet hee sleepes on, and with a little spurne,
The mother and the Prince both ouerturne.
Againe when Insurrection them assists,
Stird by the French king, and the wronged Earle,
Whose troth-plight wife, king Iohn had tane to wife,
He only claps his hand vpon his sword,
Mocketh their threatnings, and in their attempts,
The harmelesse Prince receiues recureleſſe death,

Who

Whome they too late with booteleſſe teares lament.

¶ Enter Queene, with two children borne after her: ſhe aſcends, and ſeeing no motion, ſhe fetcheth her children one by one; but ſeeing yet no motion, ſhe deſcēdeth wringing her hands, and departeth. Enter *Matilda*, in mourning vaile, reading on a booke, at whoſe comming he ſtarteth, and ſitteth vpright: as ſhee paſſeth by, hee ſmiles, and foldes his armes, as if hee did embrace her; being gone, he ſtarts ſodainly, and ſpeakes.

King. Matilda, ſtay Matilda, doe but ſpeake:
Whoes there? Intreate Matilda to come backe.
Bon. Who would you haue, my Lord?
Kin. Why, my Lord Bonuill: I would haue Matilda:
That but euen now, paſt by toward the dooze.
Bon. I ſawe her not my Lord.
King. Hadſt thou a louers eye,
A gnat, a moate, a ſhadowe thou wouldſt ſpy:
Come followe me, ſhe cannot be ſo farre,
But I ſhall ouertake her: come away. Exeunt.
Fri. The laſt appearance ſhadowed the faire Queene,
And her two childzen, at whoſe ſight king Iohn
Shewd neither ſigne noz ſhewe of paſſion:
But when the ſunne came maſked in a cloude,
And vailed beautie, ioynde with chaſtitie,
Appeared in Matildaes lonely ſhape,
Ye ſtarts, he claſpes, he wakes, he cals, he ſeekes
The ſhadowe of that ſubſtance he affects:
To her he ſewes, but ſhe his ſute reiects:
To him ſhe ſewes, but he her ſute neglectes:
He ſues to be her loue, ſhe doth deſpiſe:
She ſues to liue a maid, which he denies.

What followes of this wilfull will, and shall,
This no and nay, this quenchlesse, bootlesse fire,
This cold affection, and this hot desire,
The act it selfe shall tell, and the poore Frier,
Your partiall fauours humbly doth require. *Exit.*

Sound trumpets. *Enter* king, *Bonuile*, *Salsbury*, *Loress.*

King. Now I perceiue, this only was a dreame:
Diuine Matildaes Angell did appeare,
Deckt like a Vestall, readie for heauens quire,
And to this earthly truncke will not come neare.
Well, let her goe: I must yfaith, I must,
And so I will: kings thoughts should be diuine:
So are Matildaes, so henceforth shall mine.

Old Anb. So doing, peace shall wait vpon your crown,
And blessing vpon blessing shall befall.

Kin. Its true my Lord, I know full well there shall.

Sals. Your people will wax proud of such a king,
That of himselfe is king, Lord of his thoughts:
Which by assertion of Philosophers,
Is held to be the greatest Empery.

Kin. And they said wisely, noble Anbery.

Sals. Then will Fitzwater with his gallant troopes,
Againe keepe triumphes in the English Court.
Then will Matilda

King. Matilda, what of her?

Sals. Like a bright starre, adorne the lowely traine
Of beautious Ladies, which attend the Queene,
Whose only beauty equalleth them all.

Ki. Like an old foole, whose dim eyes wanting sight,
Compar'st the sunne, to common candle light.

Sals. Pardon my liege: I doe confesse, her faire
Exceedes all these, as farre as day doth night.

King. Grossely alludes: night by moone, by starres,

By

By wandring fires, exhaled meteors,
By artificiall lightes, by eyes of beastes,
And little glow-wormes, glimpsing in the darke,
Hath somewhere brightnesse, lightnesse, and somtime
Under each Horizon in all parts cleare:
But they at no time, no where can be said
To be lesse darke, then dungeon darkenesse is.
Pitch coloured, Eban fact, blacker than blacke,
While her faire eyes giues beauty to bright day.
Sal. To heare the Queene thus praisd works my content.
Kin. The Queene? O, had I such a thought I would repent. To himselfe.
Sal. Further my Lord.
King. What shall we further wade?
I feare I shall be tyred with this iade.
Sal. The common-wealth will florish & encrease.
K. Good Oxford of those things now hold your peace:
And take the paines to fetch in Isabell.
I haue strange tydings sent me out of France,
Which she will take, I knowe, in as good part,
As I accept her praise: fetch her I say.
Exit Salsbury.
What is the old foole gone? now goe thy way.
What thinkst thou of him Hubert? tell me man.
Hub. As of a good old gentleman my Lord,
That speaks but what he thinks, & thinks you thinke
As he doth: and I warrant you
Will not conceale those praises from the Queene,
Which as hee deemes you vttred in her praise.
Kin. I would haue them beleeue it so indeede:
But I protest, is no part of my Creede.
Hu. I faith your Grace did Oxfords yeares great wrong,
To curtall his good worke, that seem'd so long:
He peraduenture would haue brought in more,
After his Preface, to rich plenties store.

Perchaunce he would haue shew'd vaine vanitie,
That in your Court is suffered bowerly:
And bad you punish ruffians with long haire,
Newe fashions, and such toyes: a speetal care
Has that good man: he turnes the statute booke:
About his hall and chambers if you looke,
The morall vertues in faire effigie,
Are liuely painted: morall Philosophie
Has not a sentence, be it great or small,
But it is painted on his Honours wall.

Enter Queene, Oxford.

Kin. Peace, peace, he comes, now lets be silent all.
Sals. I tell you I was proud of his good words.
Qu. God hold them Oxford: for its often seene,
A reconciled foe small good affords. (hold you deare.
Sals. O for beare: trust me, I gage my Honour he doth
King. How cheere you Isabell? The earle, your spouse
Hath sent defiance to the king your husband,
And like a tried tall souldier, fleds his holds
In Marchland; Where he knowes, despight of him,
And all the men that he therein can raise,
King Iohn could haue sent dogs enowe to teare
Their ill arm'd bodies peece-meale, ere his hands
Should with base blood haue staind their noble hãds.
And whether is this worshipfull good Earle
(This first loue, old loue, newe loue if you will)
Gone thinks your Ladishippe? Forsooth, good man,
To Normandy; and there he stirs vp coales,
And vrgeth strong aid for confederates,
Who, as he saies, are treacherously dispos'd.
Qu. If he doe so, the greater is his sinne:
Poore man, I haue no interest in him.
King. But he hath had in you, as it should seeme,
Els would he not make sonnets of your brow,
Your eye, your lip, your hand, your thigh,

A plague vpon him: how came he so nigh?
Nay, now you haue the curst queanes counterfet:
Through rage you shake, because you cannot raue.
But answere me; Why should the Bedlam slaue
Entitle a whole Poem to your kisse,
Calling it chery, ruby, this and this?
I tell you, I am iealous of your loue,
Which makes me breake into this passion.
Here's the kinde noble Anbery de Vere,
Knowes what I speake is true:
My Lord, my Lord, I doe appeale to you:
Are these things to be borne?
Sal. No by the Roode,
These loue-rimes are the tokens of small good.
Hu. Why my good Lord, was neuer Poetry,
Offred vnto a Ladies patronage?
Sal. Yes, but not taken.
Hu. Yes, and taken too.
Though muddy slaues, whose ballatizing rimes,
With words vnpolisht, shewe their brutish thoughts,
Naming their Maukins in each lustfull line:
Let no celestiall beautie looke awry,
When well writ poemes, touching her rich praise,
Are offerd to her vnstain'd vertues eye.
For Poetries high sprighted sonnes will raise,
True beautie to all wisht eternitie:
Therefore my Lord, your age is much to blame,
To thinke a taken Poeme Ladies shame.
Sa. You see the King, thats better read than you,
And far more wrongd than I, takes it not wel.
Ki. Yes but I doe: I thinke not Isabell, Lord,
The worse for any writing of Brunes.
Sa. Will you ha the troth my Lord? I thinke so too:
And though I be an old man, by my sword,
My arme shall iustifie my constant word.

Qu. After a long storme in a troublous sea,
The Pilot is no gladder of a calme,
Than Isabell to see the vered lookes
Of her lou'd Lord, chang'd into sweete aspects.
Kin. I will not tell thee what a world of foes,
For thy loue (deare loue) rise against my life.
To himselfe.
(Matildaes loue: fewe swords will fight for thee)
I will not number vp the many woes
That shall be multiplied, strike vpon strike
Will follow: But to shunne insuing ils,
Ile take such pledges as shall please me aske,
Of each proud Baron, dwelling in the Realme.
Bruse kinsman, and the deputie to March,
Hath a high-minded Lady to his wife,
An able sonne for armes, and a lesse boy,
That is the comfort of his fathers life:
Madame, I know you loue the Lady well,
And of her wealth you may be bold to build,
By sending you foure hundred white milch kine,
And ten like coloured bulles, to serue that heard:
So faire, that euery cow did lö seeme,
And euery bull Europaes rauisher.
To friend my selfe with such a subiects truth,
Thus I commaund; You, and Earle Salsbury
Shall, with what speede conueniently ye may,
Hye ye to Gilford, there the Ladie lies,
And her sonnes too, as I am told by spies:
All that she hath, I knowe she calleth yours,
All that she hath, I gladly would call mine,
If she abuse yee: if she vse yee well,
For euer be, what she retaines, her owne:
Only goe by as Queenes in progresse doe,
And send me word how she retaineth you.
Qu. Well, I auouch she will, before I goe,

Farre

Farre be it, Iohn should proone Lord Bruses foe.
Come noble Oxford, I long to be at Gilford.
Sals. In such a businesse, Madam, so doe I. Exeunt.
King. Goe on, good stales, now Gilford is mine owne.
Hubert, I charge you take an hundred horse,
And followe vnto Gilford Castle gates,
The Queene, pretend, you come to tend vpon,
Sent carefully from vs: when you are in,
Boldly demaund the Lady for her sonnes,
For pledges of her husbands faith and hers:
Whome when yee haue, vpon the Castle seize,
And keepe it to our vse vntill we come:
Meane while let me alone with Hugh your sonne,
To worke a wonder, if no prodigie:
But, whatsoere, it shall attempted be.
Hub. Euen that which to your Maiestie
May seeme contentfull, thereto I agree.
King. Goe then to Gilford, and a victor be. Exit Hub.
Moubray, our maske: are you and Chester ready?
Mow. We will before your Grace, I warrant you.
King. How thinkst of it, Mowbray?
Hu. As on a maske; but for our torch-bearers,
Hell cannot rake so mad a crewe as I.
King. Faith, who is chiefe?
Hu. Will Brand, my Lord.
But then your Grace must curbe his cruelty:
The raigne once got, he's apt for villanie.
Kin. I knowe the villaine is both rough and grim:
But as a ty-dogge I will muzzle him.
Ile bring him vp to fawne vpon my friends,
And worry dead my foes. But to our maske.
I meane this night to reuell at the feast,
Where faire Matilda graceth euery guest:
And eke my hidden curtesie she grace,

Old Bainards Castle good Fitzwaters place,
Iohn will make rich, with royall Englands wealth:
But if she do not: not those scattred bands,
Dropping from Austria, and the Holy land,
That boast so much of glorious victories,
Shall stoppe the inundations of those woes,
That like a deluge I will bring on them:
I knowe the crue is there, banish all feares:
If wrongd, they shall be ours, if welcome, theirs. Exeũt

¶ Enter *Fitzwater* and his sonne *Bruse*, and call forth his daughter.

Fitz. Why how now votary? still at your booke?
Euer in mourning weedes? For shame, for shame,
With better entertainement cheere our friends.
Now by the blest crosse you are much too blame,
To crosse our mirth thus; you are much too blame I say.
Good Lord, hath neuer woe inough of well a day!
Indeed, indeede,
Some sorrow fits: but this is more than neede.

Mat. Good father pardon me,
You saw I sate the supper and the banquet,
You knowe I cannot dance, discourse I shunne:
By reason that my wit, but small before,
Comes farre behinde the ripe wits of our age.

Young B. Youl be too ripe for mariage,
If you delay, by day, and day, thus long.
There is the noble Wigmore, lord of the March,
That lyes on Wye, Lug, and the Seuerne streames,
His sonne is like the sunnes syres Ganimede,
And for your loue, hath sent a Lord to plead:
His absence, I did purpose to excuse:

¶ Enter *Lester*, *Richmond*.

But Lester is the man for him that sues.

F. My cousin Bruse hath bene your Broker, Lester,
At least hath broke the matter to my girle.

Lest. O for a barber at the time of neede,

Or

Or one of these that dresses periwigs,
To decke my gray head with a youthfull haire:
But I must too't. Matilda, thus it is;
Say, can ye loue mee? I am Wigmors sonne.
Ma. My cousin said, he look't like Ganimede:
But you, but you.
Ley. But I, but I, you say,
Am rather like old Chremes in a play.
But thats a nice obiection: I am hee,
But by atturneyshippe made deputie.
Mat. He's neuer like to speede well, all his life,
That by atturney sues to winne a wife:
But graunt you are, whome you seeme nothing like,
Young Wigmore, the heire to this noble Lord:
He for his sonne hath yet sent vs nere a word.
Old. Br. If you grant loue, when his sonne doth wooe,
Then in your ioynture heele send, say, and doe.
Y. Br. And for a dower, cosin take my word,
Looke for a good egge, he was a good bird:
Cocke a the game ifaith, neuer feare.
Ma. I, but I feare the match will fall out ill,
Because he saies his sonne is named Will.
Fitz. And why good daughter? Hath some Palmister,
Some Augur, or some dreaming Calculator
(For such I know you often hearken to)
Bene prating gainst the name? Go too, go too,
Doe not beleeue them. Lester, fall to wooe.
Ma. I must beleeue my father, and tis you,
That if I ought misdid, reproou'd me still,
And chiding said, you'r wedded to your will.
Fitz. God for thy mercy, haue yee caught me there?
Wigmore is William, woman. Lester, speake,
Thou art the simplest wooer in the world.
Lest. You haue put me out, & she hath tooke me down:
You with your talke, she with her ready tongue.
You told me I should find her milde and still,

And scarce a worde come from her in an hower,
Then did I thinke, I should haue all the talke,
Unhindred by your willingnesse to helpe,
Unanswerd till I had no more to say: And then
Y.B. What then? she with a courtly curtsie saying nay.
Ma. Your friends atturney might haue gone his way,
With as great credit, as did that Orator,
Which handling an Oration, some three howers,
Ill for the matter, worse than bad for phrase:
Hauing said Dixi; lookt, and found not one,
To praise or dispraise his Oration:
For, wearied with his talke, they all were gone.
F. Now by my troth, if any troth I haue,
I am as merry at Matildaes mirth,
As I was glad to see her first daies birth.
For till this hower, so helpe me holidam,
Since the too timely death of Huntington,
Not a blithe word had passage through her lips.
Ley. See what a pleasing humour wooers bring.
Cos. B. O but yee leaue too soone.
Ley. Yet shee auerers
I stand too long, shall I chuse yours or hers?
Mat. Either forbeare, I pray yee, for a while.
Welcome Lord Richmond.
Rich. What, doth Matilda smile?
That still like sadnesse solitary sat:
Then off with widowes weedes, and teach your feete,
(That haue forgot for want of exercise,
And by the meanes your sorrowe had no meane)
To tread a measure: for a gallant crue,
Of courtly maskers landed at the staires,
Before whome vnintreated, I am come,
And haue preuented, I beleeue, their page,
Who with his torch is entred.
Fitz. Richmond, thankes:

Boy

If you haue ought to say about the maskers,
Beseech the Gentlemen to enter in:
For they are welcome guests to old Fitzwater.
Exit Messenger.
Sonne, sonne, I pray you fetch the Ladies in:
We haue beene talking here about a match,
And left our noble friends in discontent.
Rich. Nay by my faith, we had much merriment;
Yet thought it long, you neither came, nor sent.
Matilda faints, and sits downe.
Fitz. How now Matilda? pray thee cheere thee girle.
Mat. I thought it was a lightning before death:
Too sodaine to be certaine: good pleasure stay.
Enter Ladies.
Wilt thou not wanton? churle then goe thy way.
After maske.
Ri. What? chang'd so soon? so soon falne to your dumps?
Cheerly: the maske comes in. O God, this veile & looke
Fit not this sport.
Mat. Ile leaue it. (stay.
Lest. Nay: for your loue, Williams sake, faire maiden

Dance: Maskers take each a Ladie, *Iohn Matilda*: but refusing, father;

This is no courtship daughter, be not nice;
You both abuse him and disparage vs:
His fellowes had the Ladies they did chuse,
And wel you knowe, heres no more maids than Maud:
Your selfe are all our store: I pray you rise,
Or by my faith, I say you doe vs wrong.
Mat. I wil do what you wil: lead, lead your daunce.
Ki. You know me by my speach.
Mat. I my Liege, I: O! that temptatious tongue
Had no where to be plac't but in your head.

K. Well, say I haue her tongue, had I not neede,
When you haue both her eyes: nay all her shape:
Able to tempt euen loue himselfe to rape.
Ma. Good my Lord leaue; or I will leaue the place.

Daunce againe; & in the first course *Maitlda* flings from him: *Iohn* followes.

Fitz. Daunce out your Galliard: Gods deare holidead,
Y'are too forgetfull: daunce, or by my troth,
You'l moue my patience more than I will speake.
She vnwilling, *Iohn* roughly pulsher.
Nay soft vnmannerd sir, you are too rough:
Her ioynts are weake, your armes are strong & tough:
If yee come here for sport, you welcome be,
If not, better your roome than such bad company.
Iohn threatens him by signes.
Dost threaten mee? then will I see thy face.
Kin. And so thou shalt, looke on me rebell Lord;
Thou that wert late a factious ring-leader,
And in the open field gau'st me fierce fight,
Art thou againe gathering another head,
That with such rudenesse thou dost entertaine
The gentle comming of thy Soueraigne?
Fitz. My dread Lord, heare me, and forgiue this fault:
What I haue earst done, long since you forgaue:
If I did lead the Barons in the field,
The Barons chose me, when they could not chuse
But make some leader, you were so misled.
When better thoughts entred your royall breast,
We then obeyd you, as our Soueraigne head.
King. You did euen what you list, and so doe still.
I am the king, but you must haue your will:
The plaine troth is, we are not come in sport,
Though for our comming, this was our best cloake:

For

For if we neuer come, till you doe send,
We must not be your guests while bankets last,
Contentious brauls you howerly send to vs:
But we may send and send, and you returne,
This Lord is sicke, that pained with the gout,
He rid from home. You thinke I finde not out
Your close confederacies: yes I doe, no doubt.
Lest. If there be here a close confederate,
Gods vengeance light vpon him with my hate.
K. No, you are open Lester, that I knowe.
Ch. I by the Lord, my Lord, your open foe. (Chester,
Lest. By thy Lords Lord, and mine, proud Rafe of
Thou dar'st not say so, wert thou from the king.
MOW. Yes, but he dares and shall.
Rich. Mowbray, if you stand by,
He dares perchance, els will the dastard fly. (speach:
Ch. My owne sword shall maintaine my tongues true
For it is not frequented to such lies,
As wrangling Lester, and proud Richmond vse:
It cannot set out like a thundring drumme,
Or roaring Canon, stuft with naught but brags,
The multitudes of seas died red with blood,
And famous cities into cinders turn'd,
By their two armed armes.
King. I Chester.
And then they shewe vs rags, torne off belike,
From poore decayed Ladies petticotes:
For neither bill, nor feathered shot, nor pike
Made halfe or any of those rents they haue:
These patcht together, fastned vnto staues,
They will not stick to sweare, haue beene aduanc't
Against the Sophie Souldan, and the Turke.
Le. Do not maintaine proud Chester, my liues Liege.
Your words I must put vp: his if I beare
Yes you shall beare them, Beare, and yet not bite:

We haue you muzzeld now: remember once
You brau'd vs with your Bombard boasting words:
Come bitterly, Lester, Richmód, both Fitzwaters, Bruse,
Deliuer vp your swords immediatly:
And either yield your bodies to our hands,
Or giue such pledges as we shall accept,
Unto our Steward Winchester, with speede.
Lest. I will not leaue my armes, nor breake my word
Except I be prouok't: your liege-man I am sworne:
That oath is pledge enough. If you millike
Kin. Thou hearest me say, I doe.
Lest. And I reply, that pledge refus'd, I haue no more for you.
Rich. And Richmond saies as noble Lester saith;
Already haue we plighted fame and faith:
Which being scorne, returns to vs againe,
And by the kings owne mouth, we are discharg'd.
Kin. Fitzwater, what say you?
Fitz. What pledge desires my Liege?
King. I aske your stubborne daughter.
Yong Br. That were a gage to be ingag'd.
Fitz. Peace thou head-strong boy.
Pardon me soueraigne: all my power is yours:
My goods you may commaund, my life you may:
My children too I know with both their liues,
Will readily aduenture deaths worst wrongs,
To doe such seruice as true subiects should:
But honorable fame, true chastitie
Kin. Make no exceptions, yield her vp to mee,
Or looke for euer for my enmitie.
Fitz. Nay then Fitzwater tels your Maiestie,
You doe him wrong: and well will let you wit,
He will defende his honour to the death.
King. And Bruse, you are no otherwise dispos'd,
You will not giue your sons to me for pledge.

Br. I haue but one, being my lesser boy,
Who is at Gilford: for my other sonne,
Ki. He braues me with the rest.
Well it is night, and theres no sunne to sweare by,
But by Gods sonne: and by him I here protest,
A miserable stormе this night to raise,
That shall not cease, while England giueth rest,
To such vile traitors: Bruse Ile begin with you:
I will ifaith, as true as God is true.
Exeunt king, cum suis.
Lest. Then shal a stormе be raisd against a stormе,
And tempest be with tempest beaten backe.
Fitz. But this firme Iland like the sea will tosse,
And many goodly buildings goe to wracke,
Many a widowe weepe her dying sonne,
And many a mother to her helpelesse babes
Cry out vncomfortably; children peace,
Your crying vnto me is all in vaine,
Dead is my husband, your poore father slaine.
Yong Br. We can not helpe it vnkle. (power:
Ri. No, you see intreats & humble sutes haue now no
But lust and wrath the kingdome doth deuour.
Br. Ye he did menace first, and much I feare
He will to Gilford, and besiege my wife.
Fitz. O, hye to saue her. Richmond ride with him.
Rich. Let vs away Bruse, least we come to late,
And with vs take some scorе of men well armde.
Exeunt Richmond,
Fitz. Doe: Lester, and my selfe will keepe the citie,
Til we are furnisht with an able armie.
Your Nephew, Bruse, shal take an hundred armed men,
And poast to Hartford Castle with your sister:
Sith wrong will wake vs, we will keepe such watch,
As for his life, he shall not hurt vs bring.
Exeunt omnes.

¶Enter Queene, *Bruses* Ladie, *Hubert*, *Salsbury*.

Qu. Be comforted good Madame, doe not feare,
But giue your sonne as pledge vnto the king:
Your selfe at Court may keepe him company.

Wif. I am betraid, alas I am betraid,
And little thought your Highnesse had bene bent,
So much against me, for my many loues,
As to prepare an entrance for my foe.

Qu. As I shall liue in heauen, I did not knowe
Of Huberts comming: but lament not this:
Your sonne you say is gone; what feare you then?

Wi. O madame, murder, mischiefe, wrongs of men
I feare, I feare: what ist I doe not feare?
Sith hope is so farre of, despaire so neare.

Ox. Answere mee good Hubert, I pray the Hubert doe.
What thinke you of this matter, may I on your word
Perswade the woman that all things are well?

Hu. You may perswade her, if you can my Lord:
For I protest I knowe no other thing,
But that the king would haue him for a pledge of the Lord Bruses faith.

Sals. And reason too. Now by my Honour, Hubert, I protest it is good reason.
Bruse, I tell you plaine,
Is no sound cloake, to keepe Iohn from the raine.
I will goe to her. Hu. Doe good simple Earle.
If not by threats, nor my intreats she yield,
Thy braine is barren of inuention,
Dried vp with care: & neuer will shee yield her sonne to thee, that hauing power, wantst wit.

Br. Wife. I ouerheare thee *H*ubert.

Ox. So do I dame Bruse:
But stir no coles: the man is well beloued,
And merits more than so.

Bru. W. But I will answere:

Huberr

Hubert, thou fatall keeper of poore babes,
That are appointed hostages for Iohn,
Had I a sonne here, as I haue not one
(For yesterday I sent him into Wales)
Thinkst thou I would be so degenerate,
So farre from kinde, to giue him vnto thee?
I would not I protest: thou knowest my minde.
Ox. Ladie, you feare more than you needeto doe,
Indeede you doe, in verie deede you doe:
Hubert is wrongd about the thing you meane,
About young Arthus: O, I thought twas so:
Indeede the honest, good, kinde gentleman
Did all he might for safegard of the childe.
Qu. Beleeue me Madame *Bruse*, the man is wrongd.
B.w. But he wrongs me, to keepe my Castle thus,
Disarming my true seruants, arming his.
Now more of outrage comes, what shall I doe?

¶ *Enter the king, Mowbray, Winchester, Chester.*

King. O this is well. *Hubert*, wheres *Bruses* sonne?
Wi. Where thou shalt neuer see him, Iohn.
K. Ladie, we shall haue talke with you anone.
Where is he Hubert? (to confesse.
Hu. Hid, or fled my Lord: we can by no means get her
Sa. Welcome to Gilford, Oxfords liefest Lord.
K. You scarce giue welcome, ere I bid you goe:
For you my Lord, the Queene and Winchester,
Shall march to Harford. Sweete Isabell,
And if thou loue me, play the Amazon.
Matilda that hath long bewitcht mine eye,
Is as I heare by spials, now in *Harford* Castle;
Beliege her there: for now her hauty father
Ruffians it vp and downe, and all the brood
Of viperous traitors whet their poysoned teeth,
That they may feed on vs that foster them.
Goe forward, and goe with you victorie:

Which to assure, my powers shall followe you.
Sals. Did I not tell you this: then trust me next:
Nay he is chang'd, and cares no more for her,
Than I doe Madame.
King. Be gone I say, be gone:
Your speede, rich victory attendeth on:
But your delay
May giue your foes the happie glorious day.
Qu. One boone my Liege, and part.
Kin. Be briefe.
Qu. Shew that poore Ladie pittie, I beseech. Exeunt.
Kin. I will indeede. Come Ladie, let vs in.
You haue a sonne, goe in and bring him mee,
And for the Queenes sake I will fauour yee.
B.W. I haue no son: come, come: come in and search,
And if you finde him, wretched may I bee. Exit.
Ki. Chester and Hubert, see you keepe good watch.
Not farre of doe I heare a warlike sound:
Bruse on my life: looke too't while I goe in
To seeke this boy; for needs we must haue him.
Come with vs Mowbray. Exeunt.

¶ Enter *Bruse, Richmond,* Souldiers.

Rich. The Castle gates are shut. what ho: what ho?
You that are seruants to the Lady Bruse,
Arise, make entrance for your Lord and friends.

Enter, or aboue, *Hugh Winchester.*

Hu. We will make issue ere yee enter here.
Who haue we there, Richmond and Bruse? Ist you?
What, vp so soone, are yee so earely here?
In you faith the Prouerb's verified:
Y'are earely vp, and yet are nere the neare.
Rich. The worse our fortune. Bruse let vs goe hence,
We haue no power to fight, nor make defence.
Ch. What Richmond, will you proue a Runaway?
Rich. From thee good Winchester: Now ỹ Lord defend.

Bruse

Bruse. we will stay and fight.

Br. Tis to no end: we haue but twentie men, & they be tyr'd.

But ere we doe retire, tell me Lord *Hubert*,

Where are my wife and sonne?

Hu. Your wife is here, your sonne we cannot finde.

Br. Let son & wife, high heauens, your comfort finde.

Exeunt.

¶ Enter King, *Mowbray*, Ladie *Bruse*.

Chest. Bruse hath beene here, my Lord.

Ki. I, let him goe: we haue good pledges: though wee see but one,

The other we are sure will come anone.

Mow. I doe aduise you, for your owne discharge,

Deliuer vp your sonne vnto the king.

King. Nay let her chuse. Come hither Mowbray.

The king and Mowbray whisper.

Hu. The king is angry; Ladie Bruse aduise you.

L. Br. What be aduis'd by thee, to haue my louing, kinde and prettie boy, giuen to an vnkinde killer of sweete boyes?

Ch. Madame go too, take counsell of your friends, I warrant you the king will vse him well.

L. B. I, as he vs'd his Nephewe, Arthur Chester: God blesse my childe from being vsed so.

Mow. Sir *Hubert*, what are all the people voided, The horses and the cattle turned forth?

Hu. Mowbray, they be.

Mow. Then will I doe the kings commaundement.

L. B. What will he doe! good lord, what will he doe! Mowbray, I pray you what ist you will doe.

Mo. Why? fire the Castle.

L. B. The Castle Mowbray? tarry, tarry man, Hold me not Chester, gentle Mowbray stay:

Good Hubert let me goe.

MOW. You must not goe: the king is moou'd and will not heare you speake.

L. Br. But he shall heare mee. Pittie mee king Iohn, call Mowbray backe: heare mee for pitties sake, regard the Ladie Bruses wofull cry.

K. What dost thou aske?

La. First call backe Mowbray.

K. Stay Mowbray: now be briefe.

L. I haue some linnen garments, iewels, tyres, Packt in a hamper here within the lodge: O let me saue it from consuming fire.

K. And is this all?

La. Its all the little all, I here haue left.

King. Away, set fire; linnen and trash.

L. O once more heare mee, theres a pretious Iem, You haue not any richer in all the Realme: If fire doe blemish it, Arte neuer more, To his true colour, can the same restore.

Ki. Fetch it: two of yee helpe her wo her hamper hither.

La. Nay, nay: one will suffice: the Iewell if I saue, is all I aske. *Exit with Chester.*

Kin. We shall her Iewell haue.

HU. She is very fearefull I should keepe her sonne.

Within, La. Ye doe, yee doe.

Ki. Alas good Ladie: harke, Chester & she are chiding.

Enter *Chester* and she, leading the boy.

La. Let goe his hand. Is this a pawe, thinke you, To holde a tender hand in? fie for shame: A noble man so churlish? Looke I pray, His armes are grisles.

King. How now Lady *Bruse*, Doth Chester hurt the Iewell of your ioy? Now by my troth it is a prettie boy.

La. I: knewe your Maiestie as much as I, you would. say more.

King.

Ki. Well, he and you of vs no wrong shall haue:
But stay in Windsor Castle with sir Walter *Blunt*,
And honourably be vsed: prouided still,
Your husband and your sonne obey our will.
L. For this great mercie, if they disobey,
My selfe will chide them. Fortune follow Iohn,
And on his foes fall swift destruction. *Exeunt.*
K. Come let vs now after the Queene & Oxford.
Exeunt omnes.

Enter the Queene, Oxford, Souldiers.

Qu. Now are yee, worthy and resolued men,
Come to the cage where the vncleane birds bide,
That tyre on all the faire flight in the Realme.
Summon this Castle, or (to keepe my words)
This cage of night-bid owles, light-flying birds.
Offer to summon. Enter yong *Bruse*, *Matilda*,
Souldiers.
Ox. Stay drum: thou need'st not summon willing men:
Or rather wilfull: for such me thinke they be.
Qu. See yee yon baggage, muffled in black weeeds?
Those clouds folde in the Comet, that portends
Sad desolation to this royall Realme:
For euer seeke to maske her light, good friends.
Let vs disrobe her of each little beame,
And then your Phœbus will one Phoebe haue,
That while they liue shall lend your land true light,
Giue ioy vnto your day, rest to your night.
Assaile them: stay not.
Ox. Stay, and assaie them first.
I say to you, faire Queene, this fact is foule.
Let not prouoking words whet dull edg'd swords:
But try if we can blunt sharpe blades with words.
Fitzwaters Nephew, Bruse, I see thee there,
And tell thee, it is shame for such a boy,

To lead a many able men to fight.
And modeſt looking maid, I ſee you too:
And vnfit fight, to view we virginitie
Guarded with other ſouldiers, than good prayers:
But you will ſay the king occaſions it.
Say what you will, no king but would take cauſe
Of iuſt offence: yield you young Bruſe: your mother is in holde.
Yield you young maid: your father is in holde.
Ma. Will the Queene keepe me from the luſtfull king?
Then will I yield.
Qu. A plague vpon this counterfaiting queane.
Mat. Gods bleſſed mercy, will you ſtill be mad,
And wrong a noble virgine with vile ſpeach?
Ox. Let me alone: Matilda, maiden faire,
Thou virgine ſpouſe, true Huntingtons iuſt heire,
Wilt thou come hither? and I doe proteſt,
The Queene and I, to mitigate this warre,
Will doe what thou wouldeſt haue.
Ma. I come.
Br. You ſhall not goe: ſound drums to warre.
Ox. Alack, alack for woe: well God for vs, ſith it will needes be ſo.

Alarum, fight, ſtay.

Ox. What ſtay you for?
Br. Matildaes cryes doe ſtay vs.
Mat. Oxford, I came in hope of thy defence.
Br. Firſt will I die, ere you ſhall yield your ſelfe;
To any coward Lord that ſerues the King.
Ox. Coward proud boy? thou findeſt me no ſuch beaſt,
And thou ſhalt rue in earneſt this rude ieſt.

Fight againe, Matilda taken, led by the haire by two Souldiers.

Ox. Rude hands, how hale you vertuous honour forth?
You doe not well: away: now by my faith,

You

Yee doe not well I say.
Take her, faire Queene, vse her as she deserues:
Shees faire, shees noble, chast, and debonaire.
I must, according to due course of warre,
See that our souldiers scatter not too fare,
Least what care wonne, our negligence may loose. *Exit.*

Qu. Is this the Helen, this the Paragon,
That makes the English Ilinnus flame so fast?

Mat. I am not she, you see I am not shee:
I am not rauisht yet, as Helen was,
I know not what will come of Iohns desire,
That rages like the sea, that burnes like fire.

Qu. Plaine Iohn, proud lone? Ile teare your painted face: thus, thus Ile vse you.

Enter *Oxford.*

Ma. Doe, doe, what you will.

Ox. How goes this geere? ha? foule fall so foule a deed,
Poore chast childe of Fitzwater dost thou bleede.
By Gods blest mother this is more than neede:
And more I tell you true than I would beare,
Were not the danger of the campe so neere.

Enter a messenger.

Mess. My Lord, the foes haue gathered head:
Lord Bruse the father, toyneth with the sonne.

Ox. Why heres the matter, we must spend our time,
To keepe your nailes from scratching innocence,
Which should haue beene bestowed for our defence.
What shall we now do? helpe me holy God,
The foe is come, and we are out of ranke.

Skirmish: Queene taken, Matilda rescued.

Enter olde *Bruse* wounded, led by his sonne and *Lester.*

Br. Is the field ours?

Young B. I, thanks to noble *Lester.*

Br. Giue God thanks, sonne, be carefull to thy mother:

Commend me to Fitzwater, loue thy brother,
If either armes, or praiers may him recouer, Fals down.
Lest. How cheeres old *Bruse*?
Br. His soule to ioy is fled:
His griefe is in my bosome buried.
Lest. His life was dearely bought. For my eyes sawe
A shambles of dead men about his feete,
Sent by his sword vnto eternall shade:
With honour bury him: cease teares good *Bruse*.
Br. Teares helpe not I confesse: yet must I weepe.
Souldiers, your helpe to beare him to my tent.
Exeunt, cum Bruse.
Ma. We comforted great Queene: forget my wrongs.
It was my fortune, and no fault of yours.
Qu. Is she thus milde? or doth she mock my chance?
Lest. Queene Elianor, are you a prisoner?
See what it is to be a souldier.
But what foule hand hath harm'd Matildaes faire?
Speake honourable maid: who tore thy haire?
Did Oxford or the Queene this violence?
Ma. Ungentle groomes first tooke and tore me thus:
From whom old Oxford, chastising their wrong,
Most kindly brought mee to this gentle Queene:
Who laid her soft hand on my bleeding cheekes,
Gaue kisses to my lips, wept for my woe:
And was deuising how to send me backe,
Euen when your last alarum frighted vs:
And by her kindnesse, fell into your hands.
Lest. Which kindnesse we returne. Madame, be free.
Souldiers, conduct the Queene whether she please.
Qu. Farewell Matilda: if I liue, beleeue,
I will remember this. O how I grieue,
That I should wrong so innocent a maid.
Come Ladie, old Fitzwater is not farre:
Hele weepe to see these scarres, full well I knowe.

Ma.

Ma Would I were from this wofull world of warre:
Sure I will scape, and to some Nunry goe. *Exeunt.*

Enter king, Oxford, Hubert.

K. Had you her then: had you her in your power:
Ox. I marry had we; we had taken her.
K. O had she beene in mine, (her.
Not all earths power, from my power, should haue freed
Ox. You are a king: and high are Princes thoughts:
It may be with your sight you could haue chact
An host of armed men: it may be so:
But we your subiects did the best we could:
Yet Bruse the father, backing *Bruse* the sonne,
Scattred our troopes: brought rescue to Matilda,
And tooke your peerelesse Queene, their prisoner.
K. On all the race of *Bruses*, for this wrong,
I will haue vengeance. *Hubert*, call in *Brand*. *Exit Hu.*
My Lord of *Oxford*, giue vs leaue a while to be alone.
Ox. I will my liege: but be you comforted,
The Queene will be recouer'd, doe not feare,
As well as ere she was;
K. Oxford, for beare I pray. (I feare. *Exit.*
Ox. Yet for the wrong she did vnto Matilda, I feare,
K. The father and the sonne did rescue her:
The mother and the sonne shall rue the deede:
So it shall be: I am resolu'd thereon.
Matilda, my soules foode, those haue bereft:
And these of bodies foode I will bereaue.

Enter Hubert, Brand.

K. Will *Brand*?
Brand. Your Maiestie. Make legs.
K. Lesse of your curtsie. *Hubert*, stand aside.
Poast speedily to Windsor: take this ring:
Bid *Blunt* deliuer *Bruses* wife and childe,
Into your hands: and aske him for the key
Of the darke tower, ore the dungeon vault:

In that, see you shut vp the dam and byat.
Pretend to Blunt that you haue left them meat,
Will serue some sennight: and vnto him say,
It is my will you bring the key away.
And here you sir, I charge you on your life,
You doe not leaue a bit of bread with them.
Brand. I warrant you, let me alone.
Ki. Come backe againe with all the speede you may.
Hugh. Some cruell taske is pointed for that slaue,
Which he will execute as cruelly.
Kin. No ruth, no pittie shall haue harbour here,
Till faire Matilda be within these armes.

Enter Oxford with the Queene.

Oxf. Comfort my Lord, comfort my gratious Lord.
Your loue is come againe.
Ki. Ah Oxford, where?
Ox. Here my dread Soueraigne.
Kin. Thou lyest, she is not there.
Ox. Under correction you wrong my age.
Say I beseech you, is not this the Queene?
Kin. I cry you mercie Oxford, tis indeede.
Where is Matilda?
Qu. Where vertue, chastitie, and innocence remain, there is Matilda.
King. How comes she, pray, to be so chaste, so faire, so vertuous in your eye?
Qu. She freed me from my foes, and neuer brag'd
Of great abuse, when she was prisoner.
Kin. What did you to her?
Qu. Raild vpon her first,
Then tare her haire, and rent her tender cheekes.
K. O heauen! was not the day darke at that foule deed?
Could the sunne see, without a red eclipse,
The purple teares fall from those tyrant wounds!

Out

But Aethiope, Gypsie, thick lipt Blackamooze:
Wolfe, Tygresse, worse than either of them both.
Ox. Are you aduis'd my Lord?
K. But doting Earle.
Couldst thou endure to see such violence?
Ox. I tell you plaine my Lord, I brookt it not,
But staid the tempest.
K. Rend my lones cheekes? that matchlesse Effigie,
Of wonder-working, natures chiefest worke.
Teare her rich haire? to which, gold wyres,
Sunnes rayes, and best of best compares
(In their most pride) haue no comparison.
Abuse her name? Matildaes sacred name?
O barbarous outrage, rudenesse mercilesse-
Qu. I told you Oxford, you mistooke the king.
Ox. I did indeede: my liege Lord giue me leaue,
To leaue the Campe.
K. Away old foole: and take with thee that trull:
For if she stay,
Ox. Come Ladie, come away.
Tempt not his rage: ruine wrath alwaies brings:
Lust being lord, there is no trust in kings. Exit.

¶ Enter Mowbray.

Mou. To armes king Iohn: Fitzwaters field is pitcht,
About some mile hence, on a champain plaine.
Chester hath drawne our souldiers in array:
The wings already haue begun the fight.
K. Thither we will with wings of vengeance fly,
And winne Matilda, or loose victory. Exeunt.

Enter Ladie *Bruse*, and *Brand*.

La. Why did my keeper put vs in thy hands?
Wherein haue we offended *Blunt* or thee?
Brand. You neede not make these words:
You must remoue your lodging: this is all.

Be not afeard: come come, here is the doore.
L. O God how darke it is!
Brand. Goe in goe in: its higher vp the staires.
La. My trembling heart forbids mee to goe in.
O if thou haue compassion, tell me true,
What my poore boy and I must trust vnto?
Brand. I tell thee true, compassion is my foe:
Yet haue I had of thee compassion.
Take in thy childe: as I haue faith or troth,
Thou and thy boy shall be but prisoners:
And I must daily bring you meat and drinke.
La. Well, thou hast sworn: and God so giue thee light,
As in this darke place thou remembrest vs.
Poore heart, thou laugh'st, and hast not wit to thinke,
Upon the many feares that me afflict.
I will not in: helpe vs, assist vs Blunt,
We shall be murdred in a dungeon.
Brand. Cry without cause: I le haue yee in y faith.
La. O let my boy and I but dine with Blunt,
And then I will with patience goe in.
Br. Will ye, or nill yee, zounds, ye must goe in,
And neuer dine.
La. What saiest thou? neuer dine?
Bra. No not with Blunt, I meane. Goe in I say:
Or by this hand, yee get no meat to day.
La. My childe is hungry. When shall he haue meat?
Bra. Why, and ye would goe in, immediately.
La. I will goe in: but very much I doubt,
Nor I, nor my poore boy shall ere come out. *Exit*
Hee seemes to locke a doore.
Br. Here while yee liue, y faith: now are they sure.
Cry till their h arts ake, no man can them heare.
A miserable death is famishment:
But what care I? the king commaunded me.

Alarum.

Alarum within: excursions. Enter *Fitzwater, Bruse.*

Fitz. Now doth faire fortune offer hope of speede:
But howsoere we speede: good cosin Bruse,
March with three hundred bowes & pikes to Windsor,
Spreading a rumour that the day is ours:
As ours it shall be, with the helpe of heauen.
Blunt loues our part farre better than the kings:
And will, I gage my life, vpon the newes,
Surrender vp the Castle to our vse.
By this means shall you helpe vs to a holde,
How ere it chance, set free your Lady mother
That liues in prison there, with your young brother.

Br. Away good vnkle, to the battel goe:
But that a certaine good insues I knowe,
For all the world, I would not leaue you so.

Fitz. Away, away.
God send thee Windsor: vs this happie day.

Alarum still. Enter *Hughbert.*

Hu. You cannot hide your selfe Matilda: no disguise
Will serue the turne: now must you to the king:
And all these warres will with your presence cease.
Yield you to him, hee soone will yield to peace.

MA. They say thou took'st some pittie of a childe,
The king appointing thee to seare his eyes.
Men doe report thee to be iust of word,
And a deare louer of my Lord the king.
If thou didst that, if thou be one of these:
Pittie Matilda, prostrate at thy feete.

Hugh. I sau'd young Arthurs eyes, and pittie thee:
My word is iust, which I haue giuen the king.
The King I loue: and thee I knowe he loues.
Compare these: then how can I pleasure thee?

MA. By letting me escape to Dunmow Abbey,
Where I will end my life a votary.

Hu. And the king die with doting on thy loue.
Mat. No, no: this fire of lust would be soone laide,
If once he knewe me swoine a holy maid.
Hu. Thy teares and loue of vertue haue the power
To make me, at an instant, true and false:
True to distressed beautie and rare chastitie:
False to king Iohn, that holds the sight of thee
Dearer than England, or earths Emperie.
Goe happie soule, that in so ill an age,
Hast such faire beautie for thy heritage:
Yet goe not so alone. Dost heare tall souldier?

Call a Souldier.

I know thee honest: guide this gentle maid,
To Dunmow Abbey: she is one I knowe.
I will excuse thee and content thee well.
My signe t take, that yee may passe vnsearcht.
Mat. Kinde Hubert, many prayers, for this good deede,
Shall on my beads be daily numbered.

¶ Enter *Lester, Richmond, Fitzwater.*

Lest. O trebble heat of honour, toyle and rage!
How cheeres earle Richmond?
Fitzwater, speake old man.
We are now neere together; answere mee.
Fitz. Lester, the more our woe,
The likelier to be taken by the foe.
Rich. O let not such a thought abuse thy age:
Weele neuer yield vs to the tyrants rage.
Fitz. But if my girle be yielded,
Lest. If she be.
Fitz. I, I: theres no man but shall haue his time to dy.
Lest. Now is our bower: which they shall dearly buy.

¶ Enter king, *Hugh, Chester, Mowbray.*

Rich. Lester, weele stand like three Battalions:
What saies our noble Generall thereto?

Fitz.

Fitz. Why, I say doe: while I can, Ile keepe my place with you.

King. How now my bug-beare, will ye now submit?

Lest. To death, but not to thee.

Kin. Richmond, nor you?

Rich. Earle Richmond will not yield.

K. Me thinkes Fitzwater, you should haue more wit.

Fitz. If it be wit to liue, I haue no will:
And so in this, my will orerules my wit.

Ki. Alarum then, with weapons will (wit.
We scourge your desperate will, and teach yee to haue

Fight: driue back the king.

Withdrawe.

K. Of high heroicke spirits be they all:
We will withdraw a little and conferre:
For they are circled round, and cannot scape.

Rich. O that we three, who in the suns arise,
Were (like the three Triumuirates of Rome)
Guids of an hoast, able to vanquish Rome,
Are now alone, inclos'd with enemies!

Fitz. The glorie of the world hath no more stay:
But as it comes, it fleetes, and fades away.

Lest. Courage, and let us die; they come againe:
Its Lord Hugh *Burgh* alone, *Hughberr*, what newes?

Hu. This daies fierce slaughter, Iohn, our King, lamets:
And to you three, great leaders of an hoast,
That now haue not a man at all to leade:
You worthie captaines without companies

Lest. Fitzwarer, Richmond; by the blessed Sunne,
Lord *Hubert* mocks vs.

HU. By the Moone I doe not, and put the blessed too't,
It is as good an oath as you haue sworne.
My heart grieues, that so great hearts, as yours be,
Should put your fortunes on a sort of slaues,
That bring base feare within them to the field:

But to the matter. Sith your state is such,
That without mercie you are sure of death
(Which I am sure, and wel his Highnesse knowes,
You doe not feare at all) yet he giues grant,
On iust conditions you shall saue your liues.
Fitz. On no condition will I saue my life,
Except Matilda be returnd againe,
Unblemisht, vnabus'd; and then I yield.
Hugh. She now is where she neuer will returne,
Fitz. Neuer? O God! is my Matilda dead?
Hugh. Deade to the world: dead to this woe she is.
She liues at Dunmow, and is vowd a Nunne.
Fitz. Doe not delude me *Hubert*, gentle sonne.
Hugh. By all the faith and honour of my kin:
By my vnstain'd allegiance to the king:
By my owne word, that hath reproouelesse bin,
She is at *Dunmow*.
Fitz. O, how came she there?
Hu. When all these fields were walks for rage & fear
(This, howling like a heard of hungry wolues:
That, scudding as a heard of frighted deere)
When dust arising like a cole blacke fogge,
From friend diuided friend, loynd foe to foe:
Yet neither those, nor these could either know,
Til here and there through large wide mouthed woũds
Proud life, euen in the glorie of his heat,
Losing possession, belcht forth streames of blood:
Whose spouts in falling, made ten thousand drops,
And with that purple shower the dust alaid:
At such a time met I the trembling maid,
Seeming a doue, from all her fellowes parted.
Seene, knowne, and taken: vnseene & vnknowne,
To any other that did knowe vs both,
At her entreats I sent her safely guided,
To Dunmow Abbey: and the guide returnd,

Al-

Assures me she was gladfully receiu'd,
Pittied: and in his sight did take her oath.
Fitz Hubert, for this thy honourable deede,
I and my house will reuerence thy name.
Hu. Yet, I beseech you, hide it from the King:
At least that I conuaid her to the place.
Enter King, *Mowbray, Chester*,
Fitz. Hubert, I will.
Ki. What, stand they still on tearmes?
Lest. On honourable tearmes, on tearms of right.
Our liues without our libertie we scorne.
King. You shall haue life and libertie, I sweare.
Lest. Then *Lester* bowes his knee to his liege Lord,
And humbly begs his Highnesse to beware
Of wronging innocence, as he hath done.
Rich. The like Richmond desires; & yields his sword.
Kin. I doe imbrace ye both, and hold my selfe
Richer by a whole Realm, in hauing you.
Fitz. Much is my wrong: yet I submit with these,
Begging free leaue, to liue a priuate life.
King. Old brands of malice in thy bosome rest.
Thou shalt haue leaue to leaue mee, neuer doubt.
Fitzwater, see thou shippe thee straight for France,
And neuer set thy foote on English shore,
Till I repeale thee. Goe, goe hence in peace.
Lest. Why doth your Highnesse wrong Fitzwater thus?
King. I right his wrong; he's wearie of the land.
Rich. Not of the land, but of a publike life.
Kin. Content ye Lords: in such quick times as these,
We must not keepe a drone among our bees.
Fitz. I am as glad to goe, as you to send:
Yet I beseech this fauour of your Grace,
That I may see Matilda ere I part.
Ki. Matilda? See Matilda, if thou canst
Before Sunne set; stay not another day.

The Abbey walls, that shrowd my happy child,
Appeare within her hapleſſe fathers ſight.
Farewell my Soueraigne. Leſter, Richmond, Lords:
Farewell to all: griefe giues no way to words.
King. Fitzwater ſtay: Lords, giue vs leaue a while.
Hubert, goe you before vnto the Abbeſſe,
And ſignifie our comming; let her bring
(*Exit Hubert.*)
Matilda to her father. Come old man;
Be not too froward, and we ſhall be friends.
About this girle our mortall iarres began:
And if thou wilt, here all our quarrell ends.
Fitz. Reſerue my honour, and my daughters fame,
And no poore ſubiect that your Grace commands,
Shall willinger ſubmit, obey, and ſerue.
K. Do then but this; Perſwade thy beautious child,
To leaue the Nunry and returne to Court:
And I proteſt from henceforth to forſweare
All ſuch conceipts of luſt as I haue borne.
Fitz. I will, my Lord, doe all that I may doe:
But giue me leaue, in this, to doubt of you.
K. This ſmall thing graunt, and aſke me any thing:
Or elſe die in exile, loath'd of the King.
Fitz. You ſhall perceiue I will doe what I may.
Enter, on the wall, Abbeſſe, Matilda.
Hu. Matilda is afraid to leaue the houſe:
But loe, on yonder battlement ſhe ſtands:
But in no caſe will come within your hands.
K. What: will my Lady Abbeſſe warres with vs:
Speake Ladie: wherefore ſhut you vp your gates:
Ab. Haue we not reaſon, when an hoaſt of men,
Hunt and purſue religious chaſtitie?
King Iohn, bethinke thee what thou tak'ſt in hand,
On paine of interdiction of thy Land.
Murthers and fellons may haue ſanctuary:

And

And shall not honorable maids distrest,
Religious virgins, holy Nunnes profest,
Have that small priuiledge? Now out vpon thee, out.
Holy Saint Catherine shield my virginitie:
I never stoode in such extreamitie.

Hu. My Lord, the Abbesse lyes, I warrant you:
For I have heard, there is a Monke of Bury,
That once a weake comes thither to make merry.

Kin. Content thee Hubert, that same monke and she,
And the worst come, my instruments shall be.
Good Ladie Abbesse, feare no violence:
There's not one here shall offer you offence. (staid.

Fitz. Daughter, all this while teares my speach have
My Lord the King: Lords all draw neare I pray:
And heare a poore mans parting from his childe.

Matilda, still my vnstaind honours ioy,
Faire Ornament of old Fitzwaters coat,
Borne to rich fortunes, did not this ill age
Bereaue thee of thy birth-rights heritage.
Thou seest our Soueraigne, Lord of both our liues,
A long besieger of thy chastitie,
Hath scattred all our forces, slaine our friends,
Raced our Castles, left vs nere a house
Wherein to hide vs from his wrathfull eye:
Yet God prouides; France is appointed mee:
And thou find'st house-roome in this Nunry.
Here if the king should dote, as he hath done,
Its sacriledge to tempt a holy Nunne:
But I have hope he will not: yet my feare
So drownes my hope, as I am forst to stay,
And leaue abruptly, what I more would say.

Mat. O goe not yet, my grieu'd hearts comforter,
I am as valiant to resist desire,
As euer thou wert worthie in the field.
Iohn may attempt: but if Matilda yield,

O then.

Fitz. I then Matilda, thou dost loose
The former glorie of thy chast resolues.
These seauen years hast thou bid a Martyrs paine,
Resisting in thy selfe lust-growing fier:
For being mortall, sure thou hadst desire.
And fiue sad winters haue their full course runne,
Since thou didst bury noble Huntington.
In these years, many months, and many daies,
Haue bene consum'd, thy vertues to consume:
Gifts haue bene heralds, Pandars did presume
To tempt thy chast eares, with their vnchast tongues:
All in effect, working to no effect.
For I was still the watchman of thy towre,
The keeper of fowle wormes, from my faire flower:
But now, no more, no more Fitzwater may
Defend his poore Lambe, from the Lyons prey:
Thy order and thy holy prayers may.
To helpe thee, thou hast priuiledge by lawe:
Therefore be resolute, and nobly vie,
Abhorre base lust, defend thy chastitie.

K. Dispatch Fitzwater, hinder not thy childe:
Many preferments doe on her awaite.

Fitz. I girle, I know thou shalt be offerd wealth
(Which is a shrewde inticement in sad want)
Great honours to lift vp thy lowe estate,
And glorious titles to eternize thee.
All these doe but gild ouer vgly shame:
Such wealth, my child, forcruns releaseless need:
Such honour euer proones dishonourate.
For titles, none comes neare a vertuous name:
O keepe it euer, as thou hast done yet.
And though these darke times should forget thy praise,
An age will come, that shall eternize it.
Bid me farewell, and speake it in a word.

Ma.

Ma. Farewell deare father.
Fitz. Oh farewell sweete childe.
My Liege farewell: Lester, Richmond, Hughbert,
Chester, and Mowbray: friends and foes farewell.
Matilda, see thou keepe thy spotlesse fame,
And liue eterniz'd; els die soone with shame. Exit.
Ma. Amen, amen father, adieu, adieu:
Griefe dwels with mee, sweete comfort follow you.
Ab. Come daughter come: this is a wofull sight,
When good endeauours are oppress by might.
Exeunt from aboue, Abbesse, Matilda.
K. Ah Hubert, seest thou not the sunne go downe,
Clowdy and darke? Matilda, stay one word.
She shakes her head, and scornefully saies nay.
Rich. How cheer'st thou Lester?
Lest. Mad man, at my state:
That cannot raise true honour ruinate.
Enter Messenger.
King. I will not be disdeignd: I vowe to see
Quick vengeance on this girle, for scorning me.
Mess. Young Bruse, my Lord, hath gotten Windsor castle,
Slaine Blunt your Constable, and those that kept it:
And finding in a tower his mother dead,
With his young brother staru'd and famished:
That euery one may see the rufull sight,
In the thick wall he a wide windowe makes:
And as he found them, so he lets them be
A spectacle to euery commer by,
That heauen and earth, your tyrant shame may see.
All people cursing, crying fie vpon
The tyrant mercilesse, inhumane Iohn.
Ki. Chester, and Mowbray, march away to Windsor:
Suppresse that traitor Bruse. What if his dam,
In wilfull fury, would receiue no meat,
Nor suffer her young childe any to eat,
Is it our fault? Haste yee with speede away,

And we wil followe: goe, begon I pray. *Exit.* Chamow.
Hu. O black and wofull deede! O pitious thing,
When slaues attend the fierce thoughts of a king.
Lest. My Lord, shall we goe too?
Kin. *Lester* and Richmond, *I.* I pray yee doe:
Lest. Get I my Beare & ragged staffe once more
Raisd in the field, for these wrongs some shall roare.
Exit Richmond, Lester.
K. Fetch in the Monke of *Bury*, that I talkt off,
Exit Hubert, for the Monke.
And bid Will Brand, my instrument of death,
Come likewise in. Conuert, to raging hate,
Monke, *Hugh*, *Brand*, enter.
My long resisted loue. Welcome good Monke.
Mon. Thanks to my Liege.
K. Thou hast bene long in sute,
To be installed Abbot of your house:
And in your fauour many friends haue stird.
Now is the hower that you shall be preferd,
Upon condition, and the matter small.
Short shrift to make, good honest Confessor,
I loue a faire Nunne, now in Dunmow Abbey.
The Abbesse loues you, and you pleasure her.
Now if, betweene you two, this prettie Ladie
Could be perswaded to affect a king,
Your sute is graunted; and on *Dunmowe* Abbey,
I will bestowe a hundred markes a yeare.
Mon. A holy Nunne, a young Nunne, and a Lady.
Deare ware my Lord; yet bid you well as may be:
Strike hands; a bargaine, she shall be your owne:
Or if she will not
Ki. Nay, if she doe refuse,
Ile send a deaths-man with you, this is hee:
If she be wilfull, leaue her to his hands:
And on her owne head be her hasted end.

Mon. The matter shall be done.

K. Sirra, what poysons haue you readie?

Brand. Store, store.

K. Awaite on the monke then, and ere we take horse,
Ile giue you such instructions as you neede.
Hughbert, prepare to Windsor with our hoast.

Exit King, Monke.

Hu. Your tyrannies haue lost my loue almost:
And yet I cannot chuse but loue eternally
This wanton king, repleat with crueltie.
O how are all his princely vertues staind,
With lust abhorred, and lascinious heate!
Which kindling first to fire, nowe in a flame,
Shewes to the whole world clearely his fowle shame.
To quench this flame, full many a tide of teares,
Like ouerflowing full seas, haue bene spent:
And many a dry land drunke with humane blood;
Yet nothing helps his passions violent:
Rather they adde oyle to his raging fire,
Heate to his heate, desire to his desire.
Somewhat I feare, is now a managing.
For that prodigious bloodie stigmatique,
Is neuer cald vnto his kingly sight,
But like a Comet he portendeth still
Some innouation, or some monstrous act,
Cruell, vnkindly, horrid, full of hate:
As that vile deede at Windsor, done of late.
Gentle Matilda somewhat I mistrust:
Yet thee I neede not feare, such is his loue;
Againe, the place doth giue thee warrantise.
Yet I remember when his Highnesse said,
The lustfull monke of *Bury* should him aid:
I so it is; if she haue any ill,
Through ỳ lewd shaueling will her shame be wrought.
If it so chaunce, Matildaes guiltlesse wrong,

Will with the losse of many a life be bought.
But Hubert will be still his dread Lords friend,
Howeuer he deserues, his master serue:
Though he neglect, him will not I neglect:
Whoeuer failes him, I will him affect.
For though kings fault in many a foule offence,
Subiects must sue, not mend with violence. *Exit.*

Enter *Oxford*, Queene.

Ox. Now by my faith, you are too blame Madame:
Euer tormenting euer vexing you?
Cease off these fretting humours, pray yee doe.
Grieke will not mend it, nought can pleasure you,
But patient suffering: nor by your Graces leaue,
Haue you such cause to make this hue and cry
After a husband; you haue not in good sooth.
Yearely a childe? this paiment is not bad.
Content faire Queene, and do not think it strange,
That kings doe sometimes seeke delight in change:
For now and then, I tell you, poore men range.
Sit downe a little, I will make you smile.
Though I be now like to the snowie Alpes,
I was as hot as AEtna in my youth:
All fire yfaith, true heart of oake, right steele,
A ruffian Ladie: often for my sport,
I to a lodge of mine did make resort,
To view my deere I said; deare God can tell,
It was my keepers wife, whome I lou'd well.
My Countesse (God be with her) was a shrowe,
As women be, your Maiestie doth knowe:
And some odde pickthanke put it in her head,
All was not well: but such a life I led,
And the poore keeper, and his smooth'd fact wife,
That will I, nil I, there she might not bide:
But for the people I did well prouide:

And

And by gods mother, for my Ladies ſpight,
I trickt her in her kinde, I ſerv'd her right.
Were ſhe at London, I the country kept;
Come thither, I at London would ſojourne:
Came ſhe to court, from court I ſtraightway ſkept:
Return, I to the court would backe returne.
So this way, that way, euery way ſhe went,
I ſtill was retrograde, ſeld oppoſite:
Till at the laſt, by mildeneſſe and ſubmiſſion,
We met, kiſt, ioyn'd, and here left all ſuſpition.

Qu. Now out vpon you Vere, I would haue thought,
The world had not contain'd a chaſter man.

Ox. Now, by my fay, I will be ſworne, I am.
In all I tell you, I confeſſe no ill,
But that I curb'd a froward womans will:
Yet had my Keepers wife bene of my minde,
There had bene cauſe ſome fault with vs to finde:
But I proteſt, her noes and nayes were ſuch,
That for my life ſhe euer kept goe much.

Qu. You would take nay: but our King Iohn ſaies no:
No nay, no anſwere will ſuffice his turne:
Ye, for he cannot tempt true chaſtitie,
Fills all the Land with hoſtile crueltie.
Is it not ſhame, he that ſhould puniſh ſinne,
Defend the righteous, helpe the innocent,
Carues with his ſworde, the purpoſe of his will,
Vpon the guarders of the vertuous,
And hunts admired ſpotleſſe maiden-head,
With all the darts of deſolation,
Becauſe ſhe ſcorneth to be diſſolute.
Ye, that he leaues, I doe not murmur at:
That he loues her, doth no whit me perplex,
If ſhe did loue him, or my ſelfe did hate:
But this alone is it that me doth vex,
He leaues me that loues him, and her purſues,

That loath him and lones me: how can I chuse,
But sadly grieue, and mourne in my greene youth:
When nor of her, nor mee he taketh ruthe.
Ox. Ha done, good Queene, for gods good loue, ha don.
This raging humour will no doubt be staid.
Vertuous Matilda is profest a Nunne:
Within a mile, at Dunmow liues the maid:
God will not suffer any thing so vile:
Hee will not sure, that he should her defile.
Qu. Nor Church, nor chappell, Abbey, Nunry,
Are priuiledg'd from his intemperance.
But leaue we him, and let vs, I entreat,
Goe visit faire Matilda: much I am
In debt vnto the maid.
Ox. You are indeede.
You wrongd her, when with blowes you made her bleed.
But if you please to visit her, faire dame,
Our coach is readie: we will soone be there.
Qu. Thanks Oxford; and with vs I meane to beare
The beautious garland, sent me out of Spaine:
Which I will offer in the Abbey chappell:
As witnesse of Matildaes chastitie.
Whom while I liue, I euer vow to loue,
In recompence of rash and causeleese wrong.

Enter *Brand* solus, with cuppe, bottle of poyson.

Brand. Good, by this hand: exceeding, passing good.
The dog no sooner dranke it, but, yugh, yugh quoth he:
So grins me with his teeth: lyes downe, and dies.
Yughit quoth I: by gogs bloud goe thy waies:
Of all thy line and generation,
Was neuer dog so worthipt as thou art.
For ere thou di'dst, thou wert an officer:
I ly not, by these nailes, a squires place:
For the vile cur became a countesse taster.
So dyed the dog. Now in our next account

The

The Countesse comes, lets see a Countesse & a Nunne.
Why so: why so?
What would she haue the whole world quite vndone:
Meele meete her for that trick. What, not a king?
Hanging's too good for her; I am but a plaine knaue,
And yet should any of these no forsooths,
These pray awayes, these trip and goes, these tits,
Deny mee: now by these:
A plague vpon this bottle and this cup:
I cannot act mine oath: but too't againe.
By these ten ends of flesh and blood, I sweare:
First with this hand, wound thus about her haire,
And with this dagger lustilie lambackt:
I would yfaith, I, by my villany,
I would: but here, but here she comes,
Led by two doctors in sweete letchery:
If they speede, with my poyson I goe by;
If not, haue at you maid: then steppe in I.

Enter *Matilda*, betweene the Monke and the Nunne.

Mon. And as I saide, faire maid, you haue done well,
In your distresse, to seeke this holy place:
But tell me truely, how doe you expell
The rage of lust-arising heat in you:

Ma. By prayer, by fasting, by considering
The shame of ill, and meede of doing well.

Ab. But daughter, daughter, tell me in my eare,
Haue you no fleshly fightings now and then: whisper.

Brand. Fleshly quoth you: a maid of threescore yeares,
And fleshly fightings sticking in her teeth:
Well wench, th'art matcht yfaith.

Ab. You doe confesse the king hath tempted you,
And thinking now and then on gifts and state,
A glowing heat hath proudly puft you vp:
But thanks to God, his Grace hath done you good.

Mon. Who, the kings Grace?
Mo. No: Gods Grace, holy monke. (maid.
Mo. The kings Grace faine would do you good, faire
Ma. Ill good: he meanes my fame to violate.
Ab. Well, let that be.
Br. Good baud, good mother B.
How faine you would that that good deed should be?
Ab. I was about to say somewhat vpon a thing. O thus
We maids that all the day are occupied, (it is.
In labour and chaste hallowed exercise,
Are nothing so much tempted while day lasts,
As we are tried and prooued in the night.
Tell mee Matilda, had you since you came,
No dreames, no visions, nothing worth the note?
Ma. No, I thanke God.
Ab. Truly you will, you will;
Except you take good heede and bleste your selfe.
For if I lie but on my backe a while,
I am past recouery, sure of a bad dreame.
You see you reuerend Monke now God he knowes,
I loue him dearer for his holinesse:
And I beleeue the diuell knowes it too:
For the foule fiend comes to me many a night,
As like the monke, as if he were the man.
Many a hundred nights, the Nuns haue seene:
Pray, cry, make crosses, doe they what they can.
Once gotten in, then doe I fall to worke,
My holy water bucket being neere hand,
I whisper secret spelles, and coniure him,
That the foule fiend hath no more powre to stand:
Ye downe, as I can quickly get him laid,
I bleste my selfe, and like a holy maid,
Turne on my right side, where I sleepe all night,
Without more dreames, or troubling of the spright.
Brand. An Adbelle by the crosse of my good blade,

An excellent mother to bring vp a maid,
For mee I meane, and my good master, Iohn:
But neuer any for an honest man. Coughs.
Now fie vpon that word of honestie:
Passing my throat, 'thad almost choked me:
S'blood I le forsweare it for this tricke.
Mon. We trifle time. Faire maid, its thus in brieke;
This Abbey by your meanes may haue relicke:
An hundred markes a yeare: answere I pray,
What will you doe herein?
Ma. Euen all I may.
Ab. Its charitably spoken, my faire childe:
A little thing of yours, a little helpe
Will serue the turne; learne but to beare, to beare
The burden of this world, and it will doe.
Bra. Well goe thy waies: Is this no hard thing you?
Ma. Madam, the heauie burden of the world
Hath long oppressed mee.
Ab. But not prest you right:
Now shall you beare a burden farre more light.
Ma. What burden bearing: wherto tends this talke?
Mon. To you, to vs, this Abbey and King Iohn.
Ma. O God forefend we should be thought vpon.
Mon. Lady make short, the King must lie with you.
Ma. With me, with me?
First turns to the Monke, then to the Abbesse.
Ab. Sweete neuer looke so strange:
He shall come closely, no body shall see.
Ma. How can he come, but one hath eyes to see?
Mon. Your chamber windowes shall be shadowed.
Mar. But no vaile from my conscience shadowes me.
Ab. And all the Nunnes sent quietly to bed.
Ma. But they will rise, and, by my blushing red,
Quickly giue guesse of my lost maidenhead.
Bra. She goes yfaith, by God she is their owne.
Mo. Be not so nice, the sin is venial:

Considering you yield for charitie,
And by your fall, the Nunnery shall rise.
Ab. Regard good counsell daughter, pray be wise.
Mon. Come, here's a stirre: wilt doe wench: wil it do?
Ab. Say I, say I, forget the sound of no:
Or else say no and take it: wilt thou so?
Mat. Doe you intend thus lewdely as you speake?
Br. I by gogs bloode do they: & moppet, you were best
To take their proffers, least if they forsake you,
I play the diuels part, step in and take you.
Mat. Some holy water, helpe me blessed Nunnes.
Two damned spirits, in religious weedes,
Attempt to tempt my spotlesse chastitie:
And a third diuell gaping for my soule,
With horrid starings, gastly frighteth me.
Ab. You may call while you will: but maid list what
Or be assur'd this is your dying day. (we say,

Drawes a Crucifix.

Mat. In his name that did suffer for my sinne,
And by this blessed signe, I coniure you:
Depart fowle fiends, returne from whence yee came:
Auoide yee fiends, and cease to trouble mee. (rer?
Brand. Zounds, she thinks vs diuels. Heare you coniu-
Except you vse that tricke, to coniure downe
The standing spirit of my Lord the King,
That your good mother there, the Abbesse vses,
To coniure downe the spirit of the Monke,
Not all your crosses haue the power to blesse
Your bodie from a sharpe and speedie death.
Ma. Are ye not fiends, but mortall bodies then?

Feeles them all.

Brand. Maid, maid: catch lower, when you feele yong men:
Sblood, I was neuer taken for the diuell till now?
Ma. O where shall chastitie haue true defence,
When Churchmen lay this siege to innocence?

Where

Where shall a maid haue certaine sanctuary,
When Ladie Lust rules all the Nunnery?
Now fie vpon yee both, false seeming Saints,
Incarnate diuels, diuelish hypocrites.
A cowled Monke, an aged vailed Nunne,
Become base Pandars and with lustful speach,
Assaie the chast eares of true maidenhead!
Now fie vpon this age, would I were deade.
Monk. Come leaue her Ladie; she shall haue her wish.
Ab. Speede her I pray thee; should the baggage line,
Sheele slaunder all the chaste Nunnes in the Land.
Exeunt Monke, Abbesse.
Bra. Well, well, goe get you two vnto your coniuring:
Let me alone to lay her on gods ground.
Ma. Why dost thou stay?
Bra. Why maid, because I must:
I haue a message to you from the king.
Ma. And thou art welcome to his humble maid.
I thought thee to be grim and fierce at first:
But now thou hast a sweete aspect, milde lookes.
Art thou not come to kill me from the king?
Brand. Yes.
Ma. And thou art welcom, euen the welcom'st man,
That euer came vnto a woefull maid.
Be briefe goodfellow: I haue in the world,
No goods to giue, no will at all to make:
But Gods will and the kings on me be done.
A little money kept to giue in almes,
I haue about mee, deaths-man take it all:
Thou art the last poore alms-man I shall see.
Come, come, dispatch: what weapon will death weare,
When he assailes mee? Is it knife, or sworde?
A strangling cord, or sodaine flaming fire?
Bran. Neither, thou manly maid; looke here, looke here:
A cup of poyson. Wherefore dost thou smile?

Mat. O God, in this the king is mercifull.
My deare lou'd Huntington by poyson dyed.
Good fellow, tell the king I thanke his Grace,
And doe forgiue his causelesse cruelitie.
I doe forgiue thee too; but doe aduise
Thou leaue this bloodie course, and seeke to saue
Thy soule immortall, closed in thy breast:
Giues it her.
Be briefe I pray thee: now to King Iohns health
A full carouse; and god remember not
The curse he gaue himselfe at Robins death,
Wishing by poyson he might end his life,
If euer he solicited my loue.
Farewell good fellowe, now thy medicine workes,
And with the labour, I am forc'd to rest.
Bra. Zounds she cares not, she makes death a iest.
Ma. The guiltlesse feare not death. Farewel good friend
I pray thee be no trouble in my end.
He stands staring and quaking.
Enter Oxford, Queene, Abbesse, attendants.
Ox And say you Ladie Abbesse that there came
One from the King vnto her: what was hee?
Ab. Yonder he stands, I know not what he is.
Still he stands staring.
Q. Iesus haue mercy. Oxford, come not nigh him.
Ox. Not nigh him Madame? yes: keepe you away.
Ab. Come in good Queene: I doe not meane to stay.
Exit Ab.
Nor I to stirre, before I see the end.
Ox. Why starest thou thus? speake fellow, answer me.
Who art thou?
Bra. A bloodie villaine, and a murderer.
A hundred haue I slaine with mine owne hands.
'Twas I that starv'd the Ladie Bruse to death,
And her young sonne, at Windsor Castle late.

Ile

Tis I haue slaine Matilda, blessed maid,
And now will hurry to damnations mouth,
Forst by the gnawing worme of conscience. Runs in.
Ox. Hold him for gods sake: stay the desperate wretch.
Ma. O some good pittying man compassionate,
That wretched man, so woefull desperate:
Saue him for gods sake: he hath set me free,
From much worlds woe, much wrong, much miserie.
Qu. I heare thy tongue, true perfect charitie.
Chaste maide, faire maide, looke vp and speake to mee.
Ma. Whose here? my gratious soueraigne Isabell?
I will take strength and kneele. girle,
Qu. Matilda sit, Ile kneele to thee. Forgiue me, gẽtle
My most vngentle wrongs.
Ma. Faire beautious Queene,
I giue god thankes, I doe not thinke on wrongs.
Ox. How now Fitzwaters childe? how dost thou girle?
Ma. Well, my good Lord of Oxford: prettie well:
A little trauell more, and I shall rest:
For I am almost at my iorneyes end.
O that my head were rais'd a little vp:
My drousie head, whose dim decaying lights,
Assure me it is almost time to sleep.
Raise her heade.
I thanke your Hignesse, I haue now some ease.
Be witnesse, I beseech your Maiestie,
That I forgiue the King, with all my heart:
With all the little of my liuing heart,
That giues me leaue to say, I can forgiue:
And I beseech high heauen he long may liue
A happie King, a king beloou'd and fear'd,
Oxford, for gods sake, to my father write
The latest commendations of his childe:
And say, Matilda kept his Honours charge,
Dying a spotlesse maiden vndefilde.

Bid him be glad, for I am gone to ioy:
I that did turne his weale to bitter woe:
The king and he will quickly now growe friends,
And by their friendshippe much content will growe.
Sinke earth to earth, fade flower, or vaind to fade:
But passe forth soule vnto the shrine of peace,
Beg there attonement may be quickly made.
Faire Queene, kinde Oxford, all good you attend:
Fly forth my soule, heauens king be there thy friend.
Ox. O pittie, mourning sight, age pitilesse:
Are these themessages king Iohn doth send?
Keepe in, my teares, for shame, your conduits keepe,
Sad woe beholding eyes: no, will ye not?
Why, then a Gods name weepe. Sit.
Qu. I cannot weepe for wrath: here, here, take in
The blessed bodie of this noble maid:
In milke white cloathing let the same be laid,
Exeunt with the bodie.
Vpon an open biere, that all may see
King Iohns vnkingly lust and cruelrie.
Ox. I, be it so. Your selfe, if so you please,
Will I attend vpon, and both vs waite
On chast Matildaes bodie: which with speede,
To Windsor Castle we will hence conuey:
There is another spectacle of ruth,
Old Bruses famisht Ladie and her sonne.
Qu. There is the king besieging of young Bruse,
His Lords are there: who when they see this sight,
I know will haue small heart for Iohn to fight.
Ox. But where's the murderer, ha? is not he staid?
Ser. Borne with a violent rage, he climd a tree,
And none of vs could hinder his intent:
But getting to the top boughes, fast he tied
His garters to his necke, and a weake branch,
Which being vnable to sustaine his weight,

Downe

Downe to the ground he fell, where bones and flesh
Lie paht together, in a poole of bloode.
Ox. Alas for woe: but this is iust heauens doome
On those that liue by bloode: in bloode they die.
May an example of it, honest friends,
Doe well, take paines, beware of crueltie.
Come Madam, come, to Windsor let vs goe:
And there to *Bruses* griefe, adde greater woe. *Exeunt.*

Enter Bruse, vpon the walles.

Bru. Will not my bitter bannings and sad plaints,
My iust and execrable execrations,
My teares, my prayers, my pittie-moouing mones
Preuaile, thou glorious bright Lampe of the day.
To cause thee keepe an vbit for their soules,
And dwell one month with the Antipodes?
Bright sunne retire, gylde not this vault of death,
With thy illustrate raies: retyre, retyre,
And yield black night thy Empery a while:
A little while, till as my teares be spent,
My bloode be likewise shed in raining drops,
By the tempestuous rage of tyrant Iohn.
Learne of thy loue, the morning: she hath wept,
Shower vpon shower, of siluer dewie teares.
High trees, lowe plants, and prettie little flowers
Witnesse her woe: on them her griefe appeares:
And as shee drepes on them, they doe not let,
By droppe and droppe, their mother earth to wet.
See these hard stones, how fast small rouelets
Issue from them, though they seeme issueless:
And wet eyed woe on euery thing is viewde:
Saue in thy face that smil'st at my distresse.
O doe not drinke their teares thus greedily:
Reflect the mornings mourning garments well
Vpon the sad earth. Wilt thou not, thou churle?

Then surfet with thy exhalations speedily:
For all earths venemous infecting wormes
Haue belcht their severall poysons on the fields,
Mixing their simples in thy compound draught.
Well Phœbus well, drinke on I say, drinke on:
But when thou dost ingorge thee, grant me this,
Thou power those poysons on the head of Iohn.

Drum. Enter *Chester*, *Mowbray*, Souldiers: *Lester*, *Richmond* at an other: Souldiers.

Bru. How now my Lords: were ye last night so pleas'd
With the beholding of that propertie,
Which Iohn and other murderers haue wrought,
Upon my starued mother and her sonne:
That you are come againe: Shall I againe
Set open shop, shew my dead ware, deare bought,
Of a relentlesse merchant that doth trade
On the red sea, swolne mightie with the bloud
Of noble, vertuous, harmelesse innocents:
Whose cole black vessell is of Ebonie,
Their shrouds & tackle (wrought & wou'n by wrong)
Stretcht with no other gale of winde, but griefe:
Whose sighes with full blasts beateth on her shrouds:
The Master murder is, the Pilot shame,
The Mariners rape, theft, and periury:
The burden, tyrannous oppression,
Which bowerly he in England doth vnlade:
Say, shall I open shop, and shewe my wares:
Lest. No, good Lord Bruse, we haue enough of that.
Drum: Enter king, *Hubert*, Souldiers.
Ki. To Windsor welcome, Hubert. Soft: me thinks
Bruse and our Lords are at a parly now?
Br. Chester and Mowbray, you are Iohns sworn friends:
Will you see more? Speake, answere me my Lords:

I am no niggard, you shall haue your fill.
Both. We haue too much, and surfet with the woe.
Br. Are you all full? Here comes a rauening kite,
That both at quick, at deade, at all will smite.
He shall, he must, I, and bir Lady, may
Commaund me to giue ouer holy day,
And set wide open, what you would not see.
Ki. Why stand ye Lords, and see this traitour pearcht,
Upon our Castles battlements so proude?
Come downe young *Bruse*, set ope the castle gates:
Unto thy soueraigne, let thy knee be bow'd,
And mercie shall be giuen to thee and thine.
Br. O miserable thing:
Comes mercie from the mouth of Iohn our king?
Why then belike hell will be pittifull.
I will not ope the gates, the gate I will:
The gate where thy shame, and my sorrowe sits.
See my dead mother, and her famisht sonne:
Open thy tyrants eyes: for to the world,
I will lay open thy fell cruelties.
K. We heard indeede, thy mother and her sonne
In prison dyed, by wilfull famishment.
Br. Sinne doubled vpon sin, Slaunderst thou the dead?
Unwilling willingnesse it shall appeare,
By then I haue produc't, as I will doe,
The iust presumptions gainst your vniust act,
K. Assaile the castle Lords: Alarum drums:
And drown this scrietchowls cryes wͤ your deepsounds.
Lest. I tell thee drummer, if thy drum thou smite,
By heauen, Ile send thy soule to hels darke night.
Hence with thy drum: gods passion, get thee hence:
Be gone I say, moue not my patience. Exit drum.
K. Are you aduised Lester, what you doe?
Lest. I am aduised: for my Soueraigne knowe,
Ther's not a Lord here will lift vp his arme,

Against the person of you noble youth,
Till you haue heard the circumstantiall truth,
By good presumptions, touching this foule deede.
Therefore goe on young Bruse, proceede, refell
The allegation that puts in this doubt,
Whether thy mother through her wilfulnesse,
Famisht her selfe and her sweete sonne, or no:
Br. Unlikely supposition: nature first denies,
That any mother, when her youngling cryes,
If she haue meanes, is so vnnaturall
To let it faint and starue. But we will proue
She had no meanes except this monefull meane,
This torture of her selfe. Come forth, come forth,
Sir William Blunt, whome slaunder saies I slewe:
Come tell the king and Lords what you know true.
King. Thou hast betraid our Castle. (repost,
Blunt. No: God can tell it was surpriz'd by politicke
And affirmation that your Grace was slaine.
Rich. Goon, sir William Blunt:
Passe briefely to the Ladies famishment.
Bl. About some ten daies since, there came one Brand,
Bringing a signet from my Lord the king,
And this commission signed with his hand,
Lords looke, and reade the thing.
Commaunding me (as the contents expresse)
That I should presently deliuer vp
The Ladie *Bruse* and her young sonne to him.
Mow. What time a day was this?
Bl. It was, Lord Mowbray, somewhat past eleauen:
For we were euen then sitting downe to dine.
Lest. But did yee dine?
Bl. The Ladie and her sonne did not:
Brand would not stay.
Bru. No *Lester*, no: for here is no such signe
Of any meats digesture.

Rich.

Rich. But by the way. Tell vs I pray you Blunt,
While she remained with you, was she distraught
With griefe, or any other passions violent?
Blu. She now and then would weepe, & often pray,
For reconcilement twixt the king and Lords.
Chest. How to her sonne did she affected stand?
Blu. Affection could not any more affect:
For might a mother shewe more mothers loue:
Mowb. How to my Lord the king? (king more:
Bl. O my Lord God! I neuer knewe a subiect loue
She neuer would blin telling how his Grace
Sau'd her young sonne from souldiers, & from fire.
How faire he spake, gaue her her sonne to keepe:
And then, poore Ladie, she would kisse her boy,
Pray for the king so hearty earnestly.
That in pure zeale, she wept most bitterly.
K. I weepe for her, and doe by heauen protest,
I honour'd Bruses wife. How ere that slaue
Rudely effected what I rashly wild:
Yet when he came againe, and I bethought,
What bitter pennance I had put them to,
For my conceiu'd displeasure gainst old *Bruse*,
I bad the villaine poste and beare them meat:
Which he excus'd, protesting pittie mou'd him
To leaue wine, bread, and other poudred meate,
More than they twaine could in a fortnight eate.
Blu. Indeede, this can I witnesse with the king,
Which argues in that point his innocence:
Brand did beare in a months prouision;
But lockt it like a villaine, farre from them:
And lockt them in a place where no mans eare
Might heare their lamentable wofull mones:
For all the issue both of vent and light,
Came from a louuer at the towers toppe,
Till now Lord *Bruse* made open this wide gappe.

Br. Had I not reason, thinke you, to make wide
The windowe that should let so much woe forth?
Where sits my mother martyrde by her selfe,
Hoping to saue her childe from martyrdome:
Where stands my brother martyrd by himselfe,
Because he would not taste his mothers bloud.
For thus I gather this: my mothers teeth and chin
Are bloudy with the sauage cookery,
Which her soft heart, through pittie of her sonne,
Respectlesse, made her practise on her selfe:
And her right hand, with offring it the child,
Is with her owne pure bloud staind and defilde.
My little brothers lips and chin alone,
Are tainted with the bloud: but his eauen teeth,
Like orient pearle, or snowe-white yuory,
Haue not one touch of bloud, one little spot:
Which is an argument the boy would not
Once stir his lips, to taste that bloudy foode,
Our cruell gentle mother ministred:
But as it seem'd (for see, his prettie
Palme is bloody too) he cast it on the ground.
For on this side these blessed reliques lye,
By famines rage diuided from this shrine,
Sad wofull mother in Ierusalem,
Who when thy sonne and thou didst faint for foode,
Buryed his sweete flesh in thy hungry wombe:
How mercilesse wert thou, if we compare
Thy fact and this? For my poore Ladie mother
Did kill her selfe, to saue my dying brother.
And thou vngentle sonne of Miriam,
Why didst thou beg life when thy mother lackt?
My little brother George did nobly act
A more couragious part; he would not eat,
Nor beg to liue, it seem'd he did not cry:
Fewe teares stand on his cheeke, smooth is each eye:

But

But when he sawe my mother bent to die,
He dyed with her: O childish valiancie!
Kin. Good *Bruse* haue done: my heart can not containe
The griefe it holds, my eyes must shoure down raine.
Lest. Which showers are euen as good,
As raine in harueſt, or a ſwelling floode
When neighbouring medowes lack the mowers ſithe.

¶ A march for buriall, with drum and fife. Enter *Oxford*, *Matilda* borne with Nuns, one carrying a white pendant. These words writ in golde; *Amoris, Caſtitatis, & Honoris honos.* The Queene following the *Biere*, carrying a Garland of flowers: ſet it in the midſt of the Stage.

Rich. List Lester, hearst thou not a mournfull march?
Lest. Yes Richmond, and it seemeth old de Vere.
Ox. Lords, by your leaue, is not our soueraign here?
K. Yes good old Awbury.
Ox. Ah my gratious Lord,
That you so much your high state should neglect!
Ah god in heauen forgiue this bloudie deede.
Young *Bruse*, young *Bruse*, I weepe,
Thy mothers and thy brothers wrong.
Yet to afflict thee more, more griefe I bring.
Br. O Honourable Awbery de Vere,
Let sorrow in a sable sute appeare:
Doe not misshape her garments, like delight.
If it be griefe, why cloth'ſt thou her in white?
Ox. I cannot tell thee yet: I must sit downe.
Attend young *Bruse*, and listen to the Queene:
Sheele not be tongue tyed, we shall haue a stirre
Anone, I feare, would make a man halfe sicke.
Qu. Are you here leatcher? O intemperate king,

Wilt thou not see mee? come, come, shewe your face:
Your Graces gracelesse, kings, vnkingly face.
What? mute, hands folded, eyes fixt on the earth?
Whose turne is next now to be murdered?
The famisht Bruses are on ponder fire:
On this another, I will name anone:
One for whose head this garland I doe beare,
And this faire milke-white spotlesse pendant too.
Looke vp king Iohn, see, yonder sits thy shame:
Yonder it lyes: what, must I tell her name?
It is Matilda, poysoned by thee.

Ki. Matilda: O that foule swift footed slaue,
That kils ere one haue time to bid him saue.
Faire gentle girle, vngently made away.

Br. My banisht vncles daughter, art thou there?
Then I defie all hope, and sweare

Lest. Stay Bruse, and listen wel what oath to swear.
Lewys the Dolphin, pitying our estate,
Is by the Christian king his father, sent
With aid to helpe vs, and is landed too.
Lords that will fly the denne of cruelty,
And fight to free your selues from tyranny,
Bruse, keepe that Castle, to the only vse
Of our elected king, Lewys of Fraunce.

Oxf. Gods passion doe not so: king Iohn is here.
Lords, whisper not with *Lester*. Lester, fie:
Stir not againe regardlesse mutinie:
Speake to them Hugh: I know thou lou'st the king.
Madame, goe to them, nay doe, for gods sake doe:
Downe with your stomacke: for if he goe downe,
You must downe too, and be no longer Queene:
Aduise you, goe intreat them speedily.
My soueraigne, wherefore sit you sighing there?
The Lords are all about to follow *Lewys*:
Vp and intreat them, els they will away.

Kin.

K, Good Oxford let them goe. Why should they stay?
Ox. What? are you desperate? that must not be,
Heare me my Lords.
All stand in Counsell.
Ki. This pendant let mee see.
Amoris, Castitatis, & Honoris honos.
She was indeede of London the honour once,
When she was lou'd of vertuous *Huntington*:
Of chastitie the honour, all her life:
To impure thoughts she neuer could be wonne.
And she of Honour was the honour too,
By birth, in life, she honour honoured.
Bring in two tapers lighted, quick, dispatch.
Lest. Remẽber Bruse, thy charge. Come Lords away.
All, but Oxford and *Hugh*.
Away, wee will away.
Bring in two white Tapers.
Ox. Harke *Lester* but one word, a little stay.
Helpe mee good Hubert, helpe me gentle Queene.
Againe conferre.
K. How dim these Tapers burne! they giue no light.
Here were two beautious Lamps, ý could haue taught
The Sunne to shine by day, the Moone by night:
But they are dim too: cleane extinguished.
Away with these, sith those faire lights be dead.
Ox. And as I say, harke *Bruse* vnto our talke.
Thinke you it is for loue of England, Lewis comes?
Nay: Fraunce is not so kinde: I would it were.
Aduise your selues; harke, dost thou heare me *Bruse*?
Br. Oxford, I doe.
Ox. Can noble English hearts beare the French yoke?
No *Lester*: Richmond thinke on Lewys sire,
That left you, and your king, in Palestine.
Qu. And think beside, you know not Lewys nature,
Who may be as bad as Iohn, or rather worse than he.

Hu. And looke my Lords vpon his silent woe:
His soule is at the doore of death I knowe.
See how he seekes to suck, if he could drawe,
Poyson from dead Matildaes alhie lips.
Ile be sworne his very heart strings nips.
A vengeance on that slaue, that cursed *Brand*,
Ile kill him if I liue, with this right hand.
Ox. Thou canst not Hubert, he hath kild himselfe:
But to our matter. Lester, pray thee speake.
Young Bruse, for gods sake let vs knowe thy minde.
Bru. I would be loath to be a strangers slaue:
For Englands loue, I would no French king haue.
Lest. Well *Oxford*, if I be deceiu'd in Iohn againe,
Its long of you, Lord *Hubert*, and the Queene.
Yield vp the Castle *Bruse*, weele once more try
King Iohns proceedings. Oxford, tell him so.
Oxford goes to the king, does his duety, and talkes with him.
Br. I will come downe: but first farewell dear mother.
Kisse her.
Farewell poore little George, my pretty brother.
Now will I shut my shambles in againe.
Farewell, farewell.
An euerlasting blisse your sweete soules dwell.
Ox. But you must mend yfaith, in faith you must.
Lest. My Lord, once more your subiects do submit,
Beseeching you to thinke how things haue past,
And let some comfort shine on vs your friends,
Through the bright splendour of your vertuous life.
K. I thanke you all; and Lester I protest,
I will be better than I yet haue beene.
Br. Of Windsor Castle here the keyes I yield.
K. Thanks Bruse: forgiue mee, and I pray thee see
Thy mother and thy brother buried,
Bruse offers to kisse Matilda,

In Windsor Castle Church. Doe, kisse her cheeke:
Weepe thou on that, on this side I will weepe.
Q. Chaste virgine, thus I crowne thee wth these flowers.
K. Let vs goe on to Dunmow with this maid:
Among the hallowed Nunnes let her be laide:
Vnto her tombe, a monthly pilgrimage
Doth king Iohn vowe in penance for this wrong.
Goe forward maids: on with Matildaes herse,
And on her Toombe see you ingraue this verse;
Within this Marble monument, doth lye
Matilda martyrde, for her chastitie, *Exeunt.*

Epilogus.

Thus is *Matildaes* story showne in act,
And rough heawen out by an vncunning hand:
Being of the most materiall points compacte,
That with the certainst state of truth doe stand.

FINIS.